

**ANTI-SEMITISM.
A WOMEN'S ISSUE?**

THE JEWISH WOMEN'S MAGAZINE

Lilith

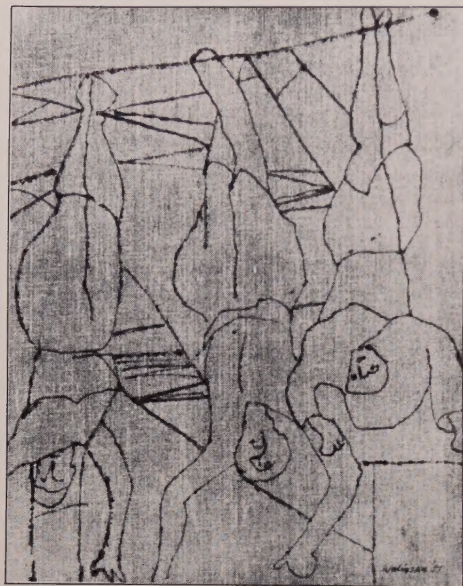
Lilith, the first woman, said to Adam, the first man:
"We are equal because we both come from the earth."

FEB 6 1981



RECLAIMING OUR HERSTORY

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR THE 80's



"I felt the burden and I couldn't turn away from it," said artist Anna Walinska of how she has felt compelled to remind the world of the Holocaust through her work.

Walinska's 93 paintings on the Holocaust were featured in two recent exhibits at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and Hebrew Union College in New York, where she lives.

Born in London, the artist came to New York at ten with her parents, Ossip Walinsky, a Jewish communal leader, and Rosa Newman Walinska, a poet and sculptor. Their involvement with Jewish life and culture brought her

into contact with people who had lost their families in the Holocaust.

"I was devastated by what I saw and read," she said. "I realized that what we needed was feeling, understanding and emotion." Her goal has been to evoke these in her audience.

"I couldn't paint a beautiful painting," Walinska said. "It wouldn't move you." Walinska's paintings of women, children and men victims of Nazi atrocities are in stark black and white.

"My work illustrates the theme 'Lest we forget,'" she said. "For me, words are difficult. My work must speak for me."

—Cindy Kaye

Lilith

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LILITH IS NAMED FOR THE LEGENDARY PREDECESSOR OF EVE WHO INSISTED ON EQUALITY WITH ADAM.

After the holy One created the first human being, Adam, He created a woman, also from the earth, and called her "Lilith." Adam said, "You are fit to be below me and I above you." Lilith said, "We are both equal because we both come from the earth."

(FROM THE ALPHABET OF BEN SIRA, 23A-B)

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"Why is LILITH so late? Why doesn't she come out regularly?"

You may be one of the many subscribers who ask us this—on the phone, in letters, at our lectures.

The answer is: no, it does not take "that long" to acquire and edit articles and do the design and production.

It does take us "that long" to raise the money to keep publishing. In addition, the lack of secretarial back-up, our inability to pay authors' fees and decent editorial salaries are major factors in the delays between issues.

We have been discussing among ourselves this question of authors' honoraria and editors' salaries and want to share some thoughts with you. We have always been committed in principle to paying authors. However, there has simply been no money for fees.

Not being able to pay authors, in addition to being against our policy, also means that some of the best and most talented women cannot afford to write for LILITH or are forced to delay their articles. This, too, contributes to LILITH's scheduling problems.

The editors of LILITH did not get paid anything (even expenses were only partly reimbursed) until about a year ago. At that time, we decided to pay editors who had worked gratis for the past four to six years a small part-time hourly wage. However, the payment or non-payment of this "salary" depends on the amount of funds in the till. The fact that editors are unable to work at LILITH full-time and work at other jobs, including cross-country lecturing, complicates the logistics of the editorial process. (If you've sent in a manuscript and have not received a decision yet, that is the reason for the delay.)

While this modus operandi was possible when LILITH was in its infancy, *the magazine has now reached the point where its voice is important on the American scene and people want to hear that voice regularly*. We have come to realize that the magazine simply cannot continue to function without factoring editorial and art staff salaries and authors' and artists' fees into

the budget.

It would seem, then, that the major problem we face is money. We have estimated that the real costs of producing each copy of LILITH are *three times* what we charge for the magazine—about \$6 a copy!

But the essential problem goes beyond money to the question of whether women will begin to support efforts that are necessary to them, to stop the schnorrer from individuals and institutions that have no stake or interest in the success of such feminist efforts.

We are, as it were, "between models" for publications. We are professional but not commercial. We are cause-oriented but have no movement behind us. Much of our time is donated, but we cannot afford—economically or politically—to be full-time volunteers.

Between the two extremes of a commercial magazine such as *Time* or *Newsweek* (produced for the owners' and stockholders' profit) and a volunteer magazine such as *Hadassah* (produced for the volunteers' benefit) lies our closest model: a non-profit "movement" publication. We publish to advance a cause that affects both our lives and the lives of our readers. Unlike standard movement publications, however, LILITH has no apparatus or organization supporting it.

The magazine's future, therefore, lies with the closest we come to such a support system—the LILITH circle of readers.

If the magazine has an impact on your thinking or your life—as your letters and phone calls indicate it does—please remember that without your support LILITH cannot continue to provide the reporting and analysis (and ammunition for your struggle) that you aren't able to find anywhere else.

On this page in the past we have asked for your financial support—above and beyond the low subscription price. We sound that call again now, because the need for your participation is more urgent than ever. LILITH has been offered a challenge grant from the Emet Foundation—\$5000, which we need to match with \$10,000 in other gifts.

Furthermore, each reader can help guarantee the future of the magazine by increasing the number of subscribers. With a base of 25,000 subscribers, we could begin to attract advertising, which would help underwrite some of LILITH's costs. To order gift subscriptions at a special discount rate, please turn to page 47.

You can also help us attract advertising by filling out the survey on page 45. You will be part of LILITH's composite portrait of readers, and you'll also have a chance to express your views of articles in this issue. Please take the time to fill out and return the questionnaire knowing that we urgently need the information only you can provide.

This issue presents new data on anti-Semitism, putting the matter into focus for us as women and as Jews. Rochelle Saidel Wolk's overview of anti-Semitism (page 8) includes material on how the right wing is using anti-Semitism as a weapon with which to attack women's rights. Judith Plaskow and Annette Daum (pages 14-17) point out how anti-Semitic perceptions have colored certain feminist writings on Christianity and on goddess worship—some writers have apparently used an unconscious anti-Jewish bias to enhance the "feminist" content of Christian theology, and others to construct a scenario of how early matriarchal religions were squelched by Jewish patriarchy. How do we respond to these problems as Jewish feminists? The articles lay out the phenomena for our examination, and make certain connections that will help us to understand the complex nature of our identities and allegiances as Jewish women.

LILITH:

thoroughly enjoyed Cynthia Ozick's "Notes Toward Finding the Right Question" [issue #6]. I fought these battles for long, I had thought that I was at the point of being driven to a raging fury, but what Cynthia wrote moved me enormously. I felt like screaming and shouting in sheer anger and frustration.

There is one point, however, where I must take issue with her. The principle of women's exemption from positive time-bound commandments does not rest on the idea of *kevod ha-tzibur* ("the honor of the congregation"). The exemptions are totally unrelated in all of rabbinic literature, as far as my research has shown me, until the recent coupling in anti-feminist polemics. Mishnah Kiddushin 7 states simply that "Positive time-bound commandments are obligated and women are exempt; negative time-bound commandments—both men and women are obligated." The *Traita* found on Megillah 23a states: "All may be part of the congregation (who are called up to the Torah), even a woman and even a slave; but the sages said that a woman should not read because of the honor of the congregation."

The status of the public reading of the Torah on Shabbat is rather ambiguous: it is technically not a positive time-bound commandment, nor is it considered part of the *mitzvah* of *Talot* (see Tosafot, on Rosh Hashanah 33a, beginning *Ha Rabbi Yose ha Rabbi Yehudah*). There is, therefore, no *a priori* reason for excluding women from the public reading of the Torah other than the social prejudice of *kevod ha-tzibur*. No reason whatsoever is given for exemption of women from positive time-bound commandments, however; it is not until a few centuries that the exemption obligations' argument makes its appearance.

Chana Friedman
Toronto, Canada

Editors:

Concerning Ozick's discussion of women's role in the synagogue, "*kevod hatzibur*"—the honor of the community—is the real reason for not calling women up to the Torah, but it has nothing to do with exempting them from public prayer. Women are excluded from the orthodox minyan, as Ozick indi-

cates, because public prayer is a commandment performed at a specific time. Unfortunately, none of the reasons given for women's exemption from time-bound commandments is very appealing from a feminist point of view. To be fair, however, it should be said that many halachic authorities require women to pray in some form at least once a day. If we are going to demand the obligation to pray publicly and be counted in a minyan, then we should already be praying regularly, in public or in private. To ignore the obligation we have while demanding a heavier one seems inconsistent.

Gitelle Rappoport
Chicago, IL

To the Editors:

Substitutions of gender in references to God, Ozick writes, lead "only to quibbles about the incompetence of pronouns." This conclusion follows the examination of several examples of her own construction. However, a section in the *Amida*, "*Modim Anachnu Lach*," begins with a feminine address; a whole passage in the *K'dusha* of Shabbat morning services uses feminine pronouns and verb forms. Such cases are not frequent, but they show Ozick's implied premise—that they do not occur—to be a little unfair. However, the existence of such ambiguities actually supports and strengthens her conclusion.

Elana B. Doering
Baltimore, MD

To the Editors:

The woman problem is not a frivolous side issue in Judaism as the establishment would have it, but the central flaw in Judaism itself, as it is in most other religions and in most societies and cultures. That is an idea so profoundly terrifying in its apparent "heresy" that it is usually evaded, distorted or trivialized. No one has better articulated the whole knotty problem than Cynthia Ozick in an example of passionate yet very lucid and intellectual writing. I am becoming an Ozick fan.

Miriam Greenwald
Merion, PA.

To the Editors:

Ozick's article makes a superb beginning towards vindicating the rights of Jewish women... but the argument she develops from the metaphoric uses of the Holocaust and "mass loss"

leads her into complicity with the kind of thinking which would regard Jews as their own worst enemy.

Jewish women who are encouraged to believe that Jewish patriarchy has victimized them as much as—if not more than—non-Jewish anti-Semitism, do not know the difference between "real" and "metaphoric" or assumed victimization... We do not minimize the loss of professional, educational and political rights, but we dare not equate these with the loss of life itself, with pogroms and expulsions, not even with the burning of holy books... It is simply not true that Jewish women, through the centuries, have suffered a mass loss, quasi or metaphorically, equal to Jewish mass loss of any aspect. Such an argument radically separates their history from Jewish history *per se*, and lends support to those women who "cannot decide between their feminism or their Judaism." Ms. Ozick's argument gives them good reason to decide against their Judaism...

Instead of the metaphor of mass loss, I suggest the metaphor of time-boundedness, for this is what history is about: events and ideas take place in time. The fact is that women were "time-bound" in their role as mothers. Biology bound them to nature, and their "time-boundedness" was part of their biological nature. For Jewish women, there should be no quarrel with their patriarchal past, for there is little if any evidence that it was oppressive. It is no aspersion on Jewish men or Jewish patriarchy that Judaism developed in such a way as to take account of this and, in the main, to take compassionate account. We can suppose that there were women whose intellectual and sexual natures suffered on this account; but to measure this humble observation against the oppression of *auto-da-fé* is to put the issue on a Procrustean bed. There can be little reason for modern Christians to concern themselves about their behavior towards Jews if the argument is that Jewish men have been the worst enemy Jewish women have had.

Jewish feminism must distinguish itself as *Jewish* feminism: it must not borrow the language of anti-Semitism in any form or allow the desire for religious equality and political maturity to mask or permit itself to be mis-

taken for Jewish self-hatred.
Roberta Kalechowsky
Marblehead, MA

Dear Editors:

Reading your magazine has made me feel less alone—I no longer apologize for "my big mouth." After all, even Cynthia Ozick thinks as I do!

What concerns me most is the attitude of women—not necessarily Orthodox or Hassidic—but those who say, "I just wouldn't feel right seeing a woman up there as a rabbi." What nonsense!

The letter of solicitation from the Jewish Theological Seminary received this past week was answered by my husband with the message that "no females there means no money from here."

Miriam Milamed
Swampscott, MA

Dear LILITH:

I read Reena Sigman Friedman's article, "The Politics of Ordination" (issue #6) with particular interest. May I compliment her on an exemplary journalistic effort.
Gerson D. Cohen
Chancellor,
Jewish Theological Seminary
New York, NY

... a fair and good article. The author captured the spirit and depth of emotion that is involved in the issue.
Israel Francus
Chairman of the Department of Talmud and Rabbinics
Jewish Theological Seminary
New York, NY

LILITH welcomes letters to the editor from readers, both to share views on articles printed and to share experiences and information. Letters must include name and address but either or both of these can be omitted.

Dear LILITH:

I read with great interest the article on the politics of ordination. It is almost a dozen years since I first raised the issue on the floor of the Rabbinical Assembly. The Rabbinical Assembly Membership Committee reports annually to the convention. At the conclusion of its report some dozen years ago, I asked the Membership Chairman whether the policy of his Committee was to consider all applicants regardless of their sex. I was hooted off the floor and the question was left unanswered.

Some five years ago it reached the floor on the last day of the convention and it was tabled. The following year, my resolution was placed before the Assembly as a formal document of the Resolutions Committee. It was debated for over an hour and the convention adjourned before a vote could be taken.

Some three years ago I once again had the formal Resolutions Committee endorsement and had good reason to believe that the vote would be favorable. Debate was scheduled for a Tuesday night, early in the convention, at an hour so late in the evening as to make it impossible to conclude debate without a vote. The Chancellor requested of me, through an intermediary, to withdraw my motion which by now had two parts: one directing the Membership Committee to consider applications regardless of sex, and the other urging the Seminary to accept candidates for the Rabbinical School regardless of their sex.

The officers of the Rabbinical Assembly circulated, following the rules governing the Assembly, a constitutional amendment that changed the language of the articles regarding membership, removing all sexist language. This change in the constitution mooted the first part of the resolution.

The second part, addressed to the Seminary, I was requested to withdraw in favor of what appeared to me a much stronger and better resolution. The Chancellor's request was for the Rabbinical Assembly to ask of him the appointment of a special commission to study the question and to report its progress at the next convention, with a final report no later than the RA convention of 1979. With mixed feelings I did request the withdrawal of the motion it was my honor to introduce, in favor of the Chancellor's request. I subsequently served on the commission the Chancellor appointed. The final vote of the commission vindicated, I thought, my earlier decision to withdraw the resolution I had worked on behalf of for so long. The Chancellor was now firmly committed to the ordination of women and I felt certain that the war was over.

I did not imagine the Seminary faculty could refuse to endorse the position of its Chancellor. Nonetheless, the faculty has that power and voted to table

the report of the commission. For the present, JTS refuses to admit women for purposes of their ultimate ordination. I was chagrined, and angered by the decision.

I believe firmly that this setback will be temporary. The cause of justice will proceed, and we will yet see women ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary. I would now predict that the first woman member of the Rabbinical Assembly will have been ordained by some other rabbinical school and I hope that time will be very soon.

The options open to those who have worked with me in the last few years to bring about a change in policy are many. I hope that people who care will insist that this question not be permitted to lie dormant. I suggest to readers who care about the issue that they press for the release of the taped record of the commission established by the Chancellor. That tape, when released, will go far to point out the strengths and weaknesses of argument. The best the opponents could come up with was a slippery slope argument—weak though it is. But the transcript of the sessions would expose the shallowness and chauvinism of the opposition. It should be released.

My commitment remains unchanged. I intend to pursue every avenue I can to bring about equality within the Jewish people and to assist the Conservative Movement in meeting its responsibilities to our heritage that seeks justice. Fishel A. Pearlmutter
Rabbi, Temple B'nai Israel
Toledo, OH

Dear Editors:

I read Professor Evelyn Torton Beck's article, "I.B. Singer's Misogyny" (issue #6), with both interest and dismay, and decided that I could not remain silent. I feel that Professor Torton Beck's comments and observations were evidence, in many (not all) cases of a very serious misreading of Singer in general, and of the works under consideration in particular.

Often this misreading stemmed from a failure to differentiate between the voice of the narrator or a character in the action (whom we are not to take at face value) and the greater controlling voice of the all-knowing author who may, in fact, be leading us to very different conclu-

sions than those his characters have drawn. Prof. Torton Beck has also quoted sentences out of context, and allowed certain statements to go totally unsubstantiated. I would like to support this criticism by speaking in greater detail about two of the stories—"Zeitl and Rickel" and "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy"—mentioned in the article.

Professor Torton Beck writes:

"Singer's thinking, epitomized in 'Zeitl and Rickel' is that 'old maids, you know, also end up half crazy. But when a woman who had a man is left alone it goes to her head.' The result in this story is a lesbian relationship which Singer views as the ultimate aberration."

Professor Torton Beck has obviously failed to differentiate between the author and the narrator. Singer, the author, is a sophisticated secularized Eastern European Jew who has lived in Poland and America and is certainly not naive about homosexuality. A close reading of "Zeitl and Rickel" will show that he and his story are full of insight and compassion for his lesbian heroines. It is not Singer who spouts the very traditional thinking of the shtetl that "old maids end up half crazy," but rather the narrator whom he has created to tell us the story.

She is very different and separate from him. She is a woman who has never left the shtetl. She is telling a story which she recalls from her not-so-recent childhood. She tries to convey all the shock, confusion, and lack of understanding that she, a young girl, felt over 40 years ago when she was a witness to the events recounted in this tale.

Even this narrator, with her rather traditional view of things, could hardly be termed totally condemning of Zeitl and Rickel. "I knew them both," she says, "may they intercede for us in heaven. They've surely served their punishment by now." Were Zeitl and Rickel's lesbianism truly the "ultimate aberration," she would hardly be able to see them as being capable of interceding for anyone in heaven. In other places, the narrator qualifies and even casts some doubts upon the veracity of some of the things she relates. ("There's no limit to what evil anyone can invent"); on other occasions her skepticism is implied by her using such qualifiers as, "I was

not there but people said," "People said. . . but I don't believe it." She is not ready to judge them on the basis of what may be only hearsay, and how much less so is Singer, who is concerned with conveying the tragedy of two people living in a society that does not accept or understand them. . . .

Zeitl and Rickel's lesbianism is explained not only by their past histories, but also by the unconventional responses to male domination and societal pressure. Even in heaven—supposedly the place of total goodness and justice for all—a lesbian relationship is preferable to a heterosexual one, because as one of them says, "Since we have husbands we shall be no one's footstools."

They feel so oppressed by society because of their lesbianism that they are constantly looking for ways to escape. They try to transcend "this vale of tears" through mysticism, and when that fails they commit suicide. They are perfectly willing to endure the hell that comes with suicide because it is preferable to the hell they must endure on earth, and because once they are through hell they can "get married up there." It will be worth the difference between men and women." This world certainly does not offer them such equality; this world ostracizes them. The author presents it with the pathos and sensitivity, not of one who condemns or abhors, but of one who wishes to combat the injustice and pain inherent in their situation.

If any story has ever been unjustly accused of showing even the slightest bit of disdain for women and their intelligence, it is "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy." For stories could be more sympathetic to women and more appreciative of their intelligence could not agree less with Professor Torton Beck who writes: *"The best known of these strong women, Yentl the Yeshiva Boy comes off relatively well in comparison to some of the others, but even here Singer hardly shows enthusiasm for the young woman's remarkable intelligence. In recognition of her capacity for and interest in learning, her father quips: 'Yentl—have the soul of a man.' 'So was I born a woman?' 'Even heaven makes mistakes.' Singer, who controls the narrative, seems to agree with this expli-*

n. For all the apparent sym-
y for Yentl's situation, her
nation to study in preference
ending socks is presented
it were a kind of failing in

nce again, the tragic flaw of
analysis lies in Prof. Torton
s failing to separate, not
between Singer the author
the narrator of the tale, but
between the author and the
acters. Yentl's father and
ownspeople may see Yentl's
aleness as a mistake made
aven, and on one level
er may agree, but his reas-
for agreeing are not those
ed in the article.

is true that when God made
a woman in Eastern Eu-
n, God made a mistake. A
an such as Yentl had no
ice to fulfill herself in that
ety and must therefore sen-
e herself to a life of an-
yny and deception. Singer
ns to be saying that this is
sad and an insult to a good
le mind. The Singer of
ntl" is very much the Singer
feels Judaism has made a
orical mistake" in not
hing women Torah. Yentl is
g proof that rigid role differ-
iation between men and
en is an artificially created
nction.

almost all respects, she is
equal if not the better of any
e. She is even built like a
—"tall, thin, bony, with
all breasts and narrow hips."
likes to dress up like a man,
she "much preferred men's
ities to women's." When
meets the boys of the ye-
a, she compares their talk to
alk of women, and to her
rise she discovers it is not
different. She proves her-

the intellectual equal of any
in the yeshiva, and she even
ages to develop a sexual-ro-
tic interest in a woman.
short, the author has shown
y times over that the differ-
between Yentl and a real
is not in her brains, her in-
sts, or even in her sexual
erence. A man can do noth-
except perhaps fulfill the
commandment with a wom-
hat Yentl is not capable of
g. The only real difference
een Yentl, who is not ac-
ed by male society and An-
who is accepted, is the
es she/he wears. Clothes
hide one's gender from the
d, and as long as they hide
i's she is free to enter a
s world and assume a male

role. The minute she takes off
her gabardine and skullcap, she
relegates herself to a life of
"bearing and rearing, knitting
and sewing."

Once Yentl has had a taste of
being Anshel, she cannot go
back to being Yentl. Singer does
not present her inclination to
study in preference to mending
socks as a failing in her. Neither
she nor Singer can condone
wasting herself totally on such
menial tasks. Nothing could be
more poignant than Yentl's ex-
planation to Avigdor of why she
cannot marry him: "I wanted to
study *Gemorah* and *Commentaries*
with you, not darn your
socks."

The narrator of "Yentl" often
speaks about the truth and how
difficult it is to find it. This story
seems to be saying that the
truth about men and women lies
buried underneath their clothes.
Clothes and sex role differentia-
tions are all artificial constructs.
Yentl is every bit as clever and
as deserving to study Torah as
any man, but because she is a
woman, society can never let her
do that. Her female body and her
supposedly "masculine" intel-
lect have condemned her to a
life on the fringes of society in
which she is "neither one nor the
other." Truly heaven has made a
mistake, but Singer blames so-
ciety for not correcting it.

I hope that these two analyses
have shown that Singer is not a
misogynist, and that his stories
are as sympathetic to women as
are his publicly stated views. I
hope that when Singer writes of
oppressed women who are vic-
timized, degraded, and overpow-
ered by men, we do not automat-

In the next issue of LILITH, we plan
to inaugurate a column devoted to
opinion, to be called *BIMA* (platform).
This column will feature pieces on
issues of concern to us as Jews, as
women and as Jewish feminists. We
invite readers to send in opinion
pieces for consideration for *BIMA*.
Pieces must be 500 to 700 words,
typed double space, 60 characters to
the line. No queries, acknowledg-
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Send to: *BIMA*, *Lilith* Magazine, 250
W. 57 St. NYC 10019 Rm. 1328.

ically assume that he condones
or hopes to perpetuate this situ-
ation. We should instead, be ask-
ing if he is not concerned and
disturbed by their plight. . . .

Sheva Zucker
Winnipeg, Canada
(The writer was Instructor of Yid-
dish Language and Literature at
the University of Manitoba at
Winnipeg, 1979-80, and is a doc-
toral candidate in Comparative
Literature—Yiddish and English—
at the CUNY Graduate Center
and the YIVO Institute for Jewish
Research, NY)

Shalom,

When the Twin Cities
Women's Minyan celebrated
Rosh Chodesh Shvat and Tu
Beshvat [New Year of the Trees],
part of our ritual included
Tzedakah. We unanimously
agreed [the money] should be
sent to *Lilith* for its continued
support. We ask you to please
accept our donation—monetary
and ideological.
The Twin Cities Women's Minyan
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN

Dear Editors:

In a Letter to the Editors in
issue #5, Professor Erich Rosen-
thal tells readers that "a new
specialty in the field of demog-
raphy addresses itself to the
problems of motivation for hav-
ing children," and he ventures
the guess "that the decision to
have children is not influenced
by propaganda." In connecting
these two assertions he leaves
readers with the impression that
demographic research will settle
the role of propaganda once and
for all.

The research to which Profes-
sor Rosenthal refers cannot and
will not resolve this question, for
the methods of this research pre-
clude the very possibility of dis-
covering the effects of propagan-
da. These methods are based on
asking women questions about
their prospective and retrospec-
tive fertility decisions—as al-
ready conceived by the re-
searcher asking the questions.
Any influences which operate at
subconscious levels or which oc-
cur in momentary and fleeting
but repeated verbal and visual
images will pass unnoticed by
the women and by the re-
searcher. Yet these messages,
taken collectively, add up to a
very powerful influence on sub-
conscious motivation.

The very fact that there are
baby booms following wars is
testimony to the power of collec-

tive sentiments in child-bearing
decisions. These collective senti-
ments are transmitted through
spoken and written word and
through visual image; in short,
through propaganda.

My own opinion, based on de-
tailed sociological analysis of
the hidden messages directed
against women in the reporting
of recent news events by the
mass media, is that we are cur-
rently witnessing, and have been
for some time, the massive cul-
tural expression of male guilt for
the Vietnam War—guilt which
expresses itself in self-hatred
projected outward against
women through the mass media,
and guilt for which women must
atone by having babies. In other
words, men atone for making
war by getting women pregnant.
Time will tell whether this con-
tention is borne out by a new
baby boom.

Sheila Klatzky
Associate Professor of
Sociology and Anthropology
Fordham University
Bronx, NY

Dear LILITH:

We have just recently learned
of the plan of the Council of
Jewish Federations to hold its
1981 Annual Meeting in St.
Louis, Missouri. As former St.
Louisans, we are proud of the
work of the Jewish Federation
and the Jewish Community Cen-
ters Association there. However,
we are concerned with the social
and political implications of
choosing St. Louis as a conven-
tion site. *Missouri is one of the
15 non-ratified states*. We are
disappointed that the Council of
Jewish Federations would tacitly
condone the non-ratified status
of Missouri by holding its annual
convention there!

We urge the CJF to give notice
to the St. Louis convention bu-
reau that you will withdraw your
convention from St. Louis unless
and until Missouri ratifies the
Equal Rights Amendment. We
also urge you to join us in ac-
tively working for the ratification
of the Equal Rights Amendment
in the non-ratified states and its
full implementation in all other
states.

From Hawaii, the first State to
ratify the Equal Rights Amend-
ment, we wish you Aloha and
Shalom.
Barbara Fischlowitz
Merle Fischlowitz
Honolulu, HI

CONSERVATIVE RABBIS ENDORSE WOMEN'S ORDINATION

The Rabbinical Assembly, the international organization of Conservative rabbis, adopted a resolution on May 13, 1980 endorsing women's ordination and calling upon members of the Jewish Theological Seminary faculty Senate to take firm action on the issue. The landmark resolution passed by a vote of 156-115 after six hours of heated debate.

Several important developments led up to the passage of this resolution. These included: the organization of opposition inside and outside the Seminary to the RA's January 1979 resolution urging that the JTS accept the positive recommendations of the Commission on Women's Ordination [see Reena Sigman Friedman's "The Politics of Women's Ordination" in issue #6—Ed.]; the vote by the JTS Senate in December 1979 tabling the issue; and the subsequent mobilization of pro-ordination forces.

The organization of opposition: The vote by the JTS Senate was originally scheduled for May 1979—and postponed several times, finally to January 1980.

Because there were complaints that a survey of Conservative congregants prepared for the Commission on the Ordination of Women by Yankelovich, Skelly and White was not distributed properly, JTS Chancellor Gerson Cohen authorized another one for the scheduled May Senate vote. It was prepared by Dr. Saul Shapiro, an IBM executive active in the Conservative congregational movement, and Dr. Charles Liebman, a sociologist specializing in Jewish issues.

The survey was based on a questionnaire sent to 17,927 households affiliated with Conservative synagogues. The results were released at the November 1979 Biennial convention of the United Synagogue, the congregational arm of the movement. The accumulated data indicated that the Conservative movement would experience a decline in membership during the next 10 to 20 years and that it would be sustained by a small "minority of those most committed" to Conservative Judaism. The report noted that, "those opposed to ordination are more observant Jews than those who favor ordination, are more committed to Conservative Judaism, and their children are more likely to be. . . Conservative synagogue members." (Surprisingly, 51% of the respondents [4,000 "usable returns" were received] said they had no position at all on women's ordination.)

Rochelle Saidel Wolk, reporting for LILITH from the convention, wrote that much controversy surrounded the presentation of the Liebman-Shapiro report. A three-page "recommendations" section was omitted from the document received by the 2000 delegates. Chancellor Cohen maintained that these "recommendations" were never intended as part of the report. Rabbi I. Usher Kirshblum of the Jewish Center of Kew Gardens Hills, a vocal opponent of women's ordination, contended that these sections were not included because "they point in the opposite direction of the one in which we are trying to go. If the Senate is to take this report to heart, it certainly cannot in good conscience vote for ordination at this point."

On December 18, 1979, some 150 rabbis and laypeople assembled in New York for a well-publicized Conference on Halachic Process, to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with "the recent tendency of the leadership of the Conservative movement, particularly that of the Rabbinical Assembly, [to] move farther and farther away from the basic tenet of Conservative Judaism: commitment to halacha."

Those attending the Conference expressed their concern that "the question of the ordination of women, [which] will affect basic halachic norms. . . is not being considered through halachic process." Five senior members of the Seminary Talmud faculty presented position papers on this subject, and Dr. Shapiro discussed what he considered to be the implications of the survey he and Liebman had done. [See article by Rochelle Saidel Wolk on this conference in these pages—Ed.]

The tactics employed by the "traditionalist" elements caused the Senate vote to be pushed up from January to December 20—just two days after the Conference on Halachic Process.

The Senate vote and its aftermath: On December 20, 1979, in a closed three-hour session, the Seminary Senate adopted by a vote of 25-19 the following motion introduced by Dr. Ismar Schorsch, Professor of Jewish History:

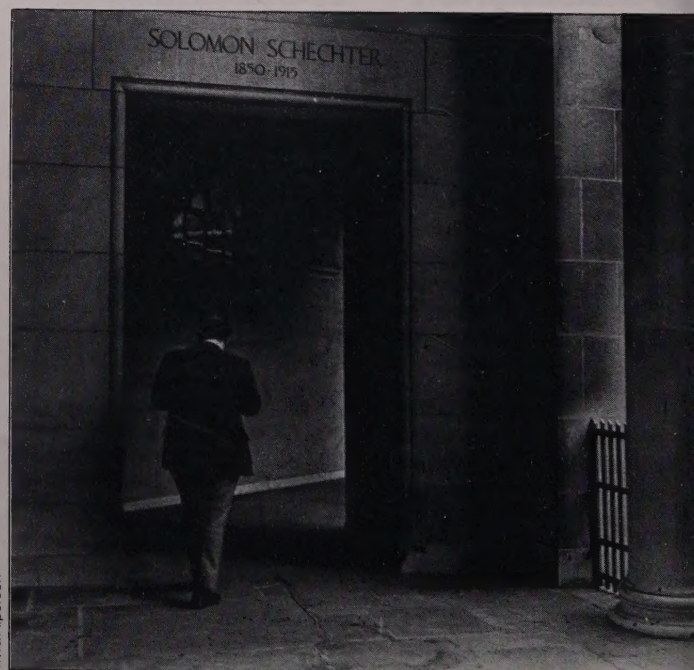
"For the past two years the prospect of a vote by the Seminary faculty on the question of ordaining women has preoccupied the attention of the Conservative movement. As the time for the vote draws near, it is abundantly clear that the question has provoked unprecedented divisions at every level of the Movement. The bitter divergence of opinion threatens to inflict irreparable damage to the academic excellence of the Seminary and the pluralistic unity of the Rabbinical Assembly."

"Accordingly, we move that the question be tabled until such time as a balanced committee of Talmudic scholars to be appointed by the Chancellor has completed a systematic study of the status of women in Jewish law. The proper resolution of the ordination question can be achieved only within this larger context. It is our hope that publication of the committee's findings will not only serve to sensitize our community in the nature of the halachic process but also contribute to the formation of a consensus on the issue."

The vote was originally described by Chancellor Gerson Cohen as a "defeat of women's ordination for the foreseeable future." Following the vote, Cohen clearly stated that he did not consider himself "morally or legally bound to appoint such a commission." He also announced that he would discuss what he considered to be the "spiritual and moral significance of the vote" at a plenary session of JTS students and faculty. Speaking before a packed audience at that January 15 meeting, Cohen revealed that the 25-member majority voting for the tabling resolution was composed of two groups: 16 individuals who had previously announced their opposition to women's ordination, including most of the JTS' renowned Talmudists; and nine faculty members who generally favored women's ordination but were unwilling to risk a split in the faculty and the Conservative movement. He declared:

"Those of us who hoped to see women studying in our Rabbinical School this year must accept the vote to postpone a decision on the ordination of women as a challenge, rather than a defeat. . . . What the faculty vote really shows is that the majority of the Senate. . . did not sense. . . the existence of a climate of opinion conducive to change. They placed higher priority on preserving the integrity of the Conservative movement, with the diversity that has always characterized it, than on the ordination of women."

He maintained that, while the vote posed a challenge to all those desirous of change in the status of women in Jewish religious life,



Shah—"Woman's Voice." The voice of the Jewish woman was not to be heard in public, lest it use men. No more. These pages are for news about Jewish women, usually in their own strong voices.

task" of creating a favorable climate of opinion "will inevitably rest heavily on the women themselves who have been denied immediate fulfillment of their dearest aspirations. In living with that frustration, I hope they will find the courage to serve the Jewish community in para-rabbinic functions, thus helping to teach the community the importance of accepting them in new roles, and welcoming their contributions."

On March 25, Cohen announced the establishment of a new program, approved by the faculty Senate, designed to train men and women for "the religious ministry." While details of eligibility, curriculum and degree remain to be worked out by a faculty committee, applications are currently being accepted. The four-year course will be comparable in duration, breadth and depth to that of the Rabbinical School, but will be distinct from it as well as from the Graduate School. The new program would qualify women for positions similar to those filled by Carol Glass, who served as assistant to Rabbi Arnold Friedman of Adath Jeshurun Synagogue in Minneapolis. He noted that, while Ms. Glass "did not perform weddings or lead the congregation in prayer, she provided spiritual leadership," through leading youth and adult groups, and teaching adult education courses. The new program," Cohen said, "fulfills what I perceive as a moral and theological mandate to enable women to provide needed spiritual leadership without reviving what threatened to become a pointless debate on ordination."

The mobilization of pro-ordination forces: Many advocates of women's ordination, however, continue to demand that this "pointless debate" be revived without delay. Leading the struggle for women's ordination is GROW, the Group for the Rabbinic Ordination of Women, founded in February 1979. GROW is an organization of Conservative rabbis and laypeople dedicated to the "immediate admission of women to the JTS Rabbinical School, and greater education of the laity in matters of Conservative practice and ideology."

Since the December Senate vote, GROW's coordinators have stepped up their efforts to rally support for women's ordination. The organization's membership is constantly expanding, and it has established a Speakers' Bureau, a Resource Library and a newsletter. GROW organized a highly successful rally of 200 people on the steps of the Seminary March 18 to "demonstrate to the Seminary and public widespread dissatisfaction" with the December vote and to "win strong support for the immediate acceptance of women candidates for ordination." Speaking at the rally, Dr. David Wolf Silverman, Professor in Philosophies of Judaism, declared:

The first group of talented women graduates to be ordained by JTS prove sufficient to convince [the more traditional elements] that religious life of our constituency will be enhanced and strengthened by their presence. . . . It is immoral . . . to let [these women] languish in programs which do not promise them the most fulfilling careers. . . . We urgently request that the Senate of the JTS vote a resounding 'yes' and grant women the right to serve as rabbis with all deliberate speed."

Other speakers were Rabbi Seymour Siegel, JTS Professor of Theology and Ethics; Lynn Gottlieb, acting rabbi to New York City's deaf community; Francine Klagsbrun, a member of the Commission on the Ordination of Women and author of *Voices of Wisdom: Jewish Ideals and Ethics for Everyday Living* (Pantheon, 1980); and GROW coordinator Elaine Kahn.

GROW also sponsored a public forum at a prominent Conservative synagogue in Riverdale, NY on May 1. At that forum, Bernice Balter, Executive Director of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, said:

While the issue [women's ordination] has been tabled in the Seminary, it has not been tabled in the community." The issue will be raised at the Women's League convention in November because "women all over the country are asking for the ordination of women. Let's not pretend that they are not."

The 1980 RA resolution: GROW's major effort this spring was directed toward the RA convention held in May, at which time it hoped extensively for the adoption of a resolution calling for the

prompt acceptance of women into the JTS Rabbinical School.

Women's ordination was a high-priority issue at the convention, attended by some 600 rabbis, as was clear from RA Executive Vice President Wolfe Kelman's opening address. Rabbi Kelman, a long-standing advocate of women's ordination, stated that:

"The Conservative movement must find a way to protect those who want a woman rabbi and those who are opposed, to respect the consciences of the traditionalists and the consciences of those who see the women's issue as a moral issue."

At the resolutions sessions, delegates voted down by a wide margin a resolution stating that the RA would take no action on the women's ordination issue for a period of two years. A resolution was passed expressing support for the creation of the new "religious ministry" program.

The original draft of the major resolution endorsing women's ordination stated that the RA "stood ready" to help the Seminary "in its deliberations" whenever it was "deemed appropriate." It was later amended by pro-ordination delegates to read:

"Without wishing to dictate a decision to the Seminary faculty in any way, the Rabbinical Assembly goes on record as favoring the ordination of women."

The adoption of this resolution marks a turning point in the policy of the RA, which has tended to defer to the Seminary, the Conservative movement's central academic institution, on this issue. Shortly after the vote, Rabbi Seymour Siegel told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that "this vote will certainly influence the members of the faculty senate to reverse the decision last year and approve the admission of women to the program of ordination" at the JTS.

However, only hours after the passage of the monumental resolution, more than 100 convention delegates assembled in a lengthy late-night meeting to form a Halachic Fellowship of the Rabbinical Assembly, a major goal of which will be to mobilize continued opposition to the ordination of women. The group, which includes many of the same people involved in the Conference on Halachic Process held in December 1979, is currently planning a conference to be held at the Seminary at which time the group will issue a formal statement of purpose.

Stating as their primary objective the evaluation of the future development of halacha within the Conservative movement, Fellowship members proposed that "a nine-member panel be commissioned by the incoming [RA] president to study and evaluate the rules and procedures of the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards," the rulings of which have come under attack by traditionalists within the RA in recent years. At one resolutions session, a special panel was formed to evaluate the Committee and report back to the RA by January 1, 1981.

The passage of the RA resolution has spurred renewed efforts to gain reconsideration of the women's ordination resolution at the Senate's next meeting in September, said GROW coordinator Lawrence Troster. He predicted that pro-ordination resolutions are likely to emerge from the conventions of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism and the United Synagogue, both scheduled for the fall. GROW is also circulating a petition supporting women's ordination among Conservative lay people, to be presented to Chancellor Cohen when 100,000 signatures have been collected.

Advocates of women's ordination are determined to maintain their lobbying campaign at full force in the months ahead. As Seymour Siegel pointed out in *Sh'ma* last February:

"It is now up to the lay and rabbinic members of the Conservative movement to make their opinions known to the leadership of the Seminary. It is unlikely that the faculty will undertake a bruising controversy over women's ordination again unless there is strong pressure to do so outside of the Seminary. As one who fought long and hard (though unsuccessfully) for the ordination of women, I await strong expressions of support for the admission of women to the Conservative rabbinate. Such vigorous expression plus the workings of the Holy Spirit will, most likely, finally move the learned members of the Seminary faculty to do the right thing."

PROPHECY OR PARANOIA?

BY ROCHELLE SAIDEL WOLK

Three of the four articles below deal with different aspects of anti-Semitism among Christian feminists and matriarchalists. These phenomena are significant because they prevent the forging of alliances among women to fight the rising tide of anti-woman violence and anti-Semitism, both from the right—the subject of the opening piece. The series will continue in future issues.—Ed.

Most of the male-dominated Jewish Establishment which tries to orchestrate Jewish public opinion from Manhattan ivory towers does not view anti-Semitism as a threat. While cranking out self-aggrandizing reports and press releases on anti-Semitism, many leaders neither voice concern about it, nor make contingency plans for combatting it either today or in the foreseeable future.

As a journalist who has covered a number of anti-Semitic activities in America for the past several years, I am convinced that anti-Semitism exists here and now and that it merits concern and vigilance. Herewith, a brief overview of the manifestations of anti-Semitism today.

Let's begin with the activities of presidential candidate Lyndon B. LaRouche, head of the right-wing **National Caucus of Labor Committees—U.S. Labor Party (NCLC-USLP)**, which emerged in its present form in the mid-1970's.

With federal matching funds for his presidential campaign, LaRouche is running as a Democrat in the 1980 primaries. He became eligible for our tax dollars by filing his candidacy, then raising \$100,000 in contributions of \$250 or less, with \$5,000 coming from 20 different states. LaRouche received 77,720 votes in the California Democratic primary held in June.

LaRouchites are not the stereotype of beer-drinking, swastika-adorned anti-Semites. They are white-collar and educated; some are even Jewish. (LaRouche has promised them immunity from the next Holocaust.) Paramilitary training with sophisticated weapons is provided for the group's "security personnel."

LaRouche has created and publicized a conspiracy fantasy in which Jews supposedly instigate anti-Semitism as part of a plot involving

the British monarchy, nobility and the upper classes, British Secret Intelligence Service, and cults and secret societies such as the "cult of Isis" and the "Black Guelph nobility." His conspiracy theory is presented with political savvy in the organization's numerous publications, often sold at airports to traveling business executives.

Dennis King, author of a series of investigative articles on the NCLC-USLP in *Our Town*, a Manhattan weekly, concluded that: "LaRouche has developed a brilliant, long-range strategy that, given a major economic crisis and polarization of American society, could actually bring NCLC to power." (August 26, 1979.)

A much older and better known anti-Semitic group is the **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)**, which can be traced back to 1866. The strength of the KKK in America is greater than it has been in more than a decade, with membership now at about 10,000, according to a 1979 report of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The report also states the number of Klan sympathizers has doubled in less than two years to between 75,000 and 100,000. There have been ugly Klan gatherings from coast to coast during the past year, in such places as Selma and Decatur, Alabama; Chicago; Detroit; San Diego; Colorado Springs; Flemington, NJ; Seabrook, NH; Winston-Salem, NC; and Baton Rouge. There have reportedly been more Klan rallies in the past two summers than in the rest of the 1970's, according to the monthly *African Mirror*. (February, 1980.)

There are four national KKK groups: United Klans of America, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; Invisible Empire, Knights of the KKK, in Denham Springs, Louisiana; Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, in Metairie, Louisiana; and Confederation of Independent Orders of the Invisible Empire, Knights of the KKK, in Greenwood, Indiana. *Crusader*, the publication of the Metairie group, the most extreme KKK outfit, is filled with anti-Semitic articles and cartoons and carries advertisements for anti-Semitic books such as Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and *The Hitler We Loved and Why*.

The Klan's vicious bigotry against Jews and blacks, as well as Cubans and other Hispanics, Asians and American Indians is not limited to words. In 1978, Maryland Klan terrorists were apprehended while attempting to bomb a synagogue. On November 3, 1979, five demonstrators at an anti-Klan rally in Greensboro, NC were murdered. That same day, 50 Klansmen paraded through the streets of Dallas and scuffled with blacks.

Perhaps most disturbing is the information in the ADL's report that Klan groups have been discovered in the Armed Forces (Army Navy) of the United States. *African Mirror* reported that at a 1979 Labor Day Weekend convention of the Klan in New Orleans, soldiers from Fort Hood, Texas served as security guards for the Klan.

Wrote columnist Jack Anderson: "The growing frustration over rising prices, job insecurity, high taxes, government spending, shortages and a host of related aggravations in troubled times, people look for outlets for their anger and scapegoats for their problems. Some, the KKK is providing the answer." (August 26, 1979.) Tom Metzger, an avowed KKK leader, won the Democratic nomination for Congress in the 43rd District of California with 32,344 votes—37% of the votes cast.

The **John Birch Society**, led by Robert Welch, claimed a membership of 60,000 in 1978. Welch believes a Masonic conspiracy of "intellectuals" (i.e., Jews) is responsible for social and political progress he considers evil. An elitist group, the Birch Society is comprised of affluent, well-educated members who own head influential businesses and can hardly be dismissed as "lunatics."

The **Liberty Lobby**, to the right of the John Birch Society, was founded in the late 1950s by its current leader, Willis Carto, a professional admirer of Adolf Hitler. In publications such as *The Spotlight*, a periodical, and *America First*, a pamphlet, appear some of the old anti-Semitic canards, e.g., Zionist leaders pushed the United States into World War I on the side of the Allies, thus angering Hitler.

Richard Cotten's **White Solidarity Movement**, operating out of Corinth, in upstate New York, produces at least 2000 copies every month of *Conservative Viewpoint*, an anti-Semitic and anti-black "newsletter." A 1978 issue printed the following: "There can be no harmony ending until such time as we break the incredible power of International Jewry. Their domination of the media—and their willingness to spend money in fulfillment of their objectives bodes ill for the future of the Western world and for Christianity."

The **National States' Rights Party**, headed by attorney J.B. Stoner, publishes *The Thunderbolt* out of Marietta, Georgia. In a typical article, Stoner wrote: "Simply observe the propaganda...and you will see that the Jews are the driving force behind the mixing of races. Without Jew power supporting the negroes, it would be easy to solve the negro problem. The Jews use negroes in their effort to destroy our White Race by polluting its blood."

Rochelle Saidel Wolk, a free-lance journalist and public relations consultant, writes for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. She is currently working on a book about the people seeking to bring Nazi war criminals in America to justice. ©Rochelle Saidel Wolk 1980.

team with the jungle blood of Africa " (October, 1973).

Probably no more than 2000 people are affiliated American Nazis, factionalized into some eight "national bodies." The largest, with perhaps 400 members, is the **National Socialist White People's Party**, founded in 1959 as the National Socialist Party of America by the late George Lincoln Rockwell. A "comic strip" circulated by this group begins: "How many cores in your area are Jew owned? In recent years the main street of EVERY major city in the U.S. has been taken over by Jews, who have driven white people—like YOU!—into bankruptcy... Learn the facts—stop the Jewish parasites—help build a strong white America!"

Another neo-Nazi group is the Chicago-based **National Socialist Party**, now led by Harold A. Covington. Covington lost the Republican primary for North Carolina Attorney General in May, 1980, but garnered 43 percent of the votes. His comment: "There are 56,000 people in this state who are either Nazis or bols... There are many closet Nazis in the Republican Party. Most conservatives are closet Nazis. If you scratch a conservative you'll find a Nazi underneath..." The American Jewish Committee issued a report on Covington saying that the "large vote... is cause for concern though its importance could not be magnified." (*Copies are available from American Jewish Committee, 165 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10022.*—Ed.)

Gerhard Lauck heads the **NSDAP-AO** (**National-sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei-Auslands Organisation**) based in Lincoln, Nebraska. He publishes much of the neo-Nazi material exported to West Germany; and *NS Wort*, a typical issue of which carried these headlines: "You thought the Mob was Italian, they're Jewish!" and "Jews ban the truth" (at six million did not die).

Similar neo-Nazi groups are centered in Cincinnati, West Virginia, San Francisco and Los Angeles. In general, these neo-Nazis are young, lower middle-class, and prone to violence. In the past two years, they have been linked with such atrocities as: the rape of a man in Vineland, N.J.; the offer of a reward to any white man or woman who killed a loot-during the July, 1977 power failure in New York City; the murder of a Jewish survivor in Chicago by forcing him to inhale cyanide.

Nazi war criminals and collaborators have found a haven in the United States. America is the third largest shelter for Nazi mass murderers—surpassed numerically only by West Germany and Argentina, according to Charles R.

Allen, Jr., an expert on the subject. No Nazi war criminal has ever been deported from America for his crimes. Over four hundred alleged Nazi war criminals and collaborators are now being investigated by the U.S. Justice Department. Some have enjoyed sanctuary in this country for more than thirty years, admittedly protected by government officials and U.S. government agencies. In some instances, not only have individual Nazi criminals come here, but the remnants of entire fascist organizations have been transplanted to our shores. The presence here of Nazi war criminals, with protective networks and seemingly limitless defense funds, is routinely shrugged off by most Jewish leaders.

While covering the deportation hearing of alleged Nazi war criminal Vilis A. Hazners, accused of atrocities against the Jews of Riga, Latvia, I came across another right-wing anti-Semitic group, the **Christian Defense League**. At a peaceful demonstration in front of Hazner's Dresden, NY home in August, 1978, Albany area students were confronted by members of the CDL carrying signs that said "All Jews are Thieves," "Go home, Jew Gestapo," and "Jews are a vengeful people."

Hazner's neighbors said he was "a good neighbor" who should be allowed to live in peace. This sentiment was also expressed by the Mineola, NY, neighbors of another alleged Nazi war criminal, Boleslavs Maikovskis, accused of directing mass shootings of Latvian Jews, in interviews with the CBS television network program "Sixty Minutes," Fall, 1976.

"What anti-feminist Jews ought to examine is the extent of the anti-Semitic vitriol with which they seem to be aligning themselves. I'm not saying that anti-ERA is anti-Semitic. But more often than we know, it is."

Jewish women are in double jeopardy—as women and as Jews—as right-wing groups use anti-Semitism in their anti-ERA campaign.

"To be anti-ERA... is to become a part of a growing extreme-right wing phalanx which, among other things, is to be less than subtly anti-Semitic..." wrote Leo Mindlin in *The Jewish Floridian*. (February 3, 1978)

Eleanor Smeal, president of NOW, called the women's movement "the first target of the

right-wing offensive," in an article in the *National NOW Times*, December, 1977. Citing the John Birch Society, the Conservative Caucus, the American Conservative Union, the American Independent Party and "a host of other ad-hoc committees and front groups," the *National NOW Times* stated:

"The ERA has been used—cynically and deliberately—as a highly emotional organizing tool to reconstitute the radical right as a force on the American political scene." Opposition to ratification of the ERA is "systematically orchestrated" by "professional radical right politicians... whose adult lives have been dedicated to advancing ultra-conservative causes," according to the article, which links anti-ERA leader Phyllis Schlafly with the Birchers.

Mindlin quotes Sandra Ellison of the National Socialist White People's Party, as an example of how anti-Semitism is used against ERA:

"The next time you read something about a rally supporting the ERA or see something on your TV news, take a good look at the demonstrators. You will probably see fat, ugly, string-haired lesbians in droopy T-shirts, fanatical Jewesses, and loud-mouthed minorities." Mindlin also quoted Ellison as saying that ERA proponents are a "scraggly coalition of dykes and kikes." This sentiment was echoed at the November 1977 IWY meeting in Houston, where, Mindlin recalled, "there were signs around the Coliseum rhyming 'Kikes for Dykes' all over the place." He concluded:

"Perhaps what anti-feminist Jews ought to examine and digest more efficiently than they have thus far is the extent of the anti-Semitic vitriol with which they seem to be aligning themselves. I'm not saying that anti-ERA is anti-Semitic. But more often than we know it is. And always, it is anti-human."

The anti-Semitic phenomena outlined above are, to me, cause for concern and vigilance. Not so, however, to most of the Jewish establishment, who refer to anti-Semitic occurrences and perpetrators as "aberrations," "pariahs," "overemphasized by the media," "lunatic," and "of little impact on the American scene."

However, polls such as a 1978 national Harris Poll conducted for the National Conference of Christians and Jews show that one-third of Americans still hold negative attitudes toward Jews.

Anti-Semitism among blacks was measured by the Survey Research Center of the University of California, Berkeley, in eight nationwide surveys in 1963-1975 under ADL aus-

pices. Judging by their scores on these surveys, blacks were more disposed than whites to be prejudiced against Jews. While 35 percent of whites surveyed scored high, 45 percent of blacks had high scores. Broken down by category, black anti-Semitism was highest on economic-related items. Unlike anti-Semitism among whites, which proved to be greater in the older generation, black anti-Semitism was higher among younger people. The surveys admittedly did not test how much black anti-Semitism was in reality anti-white sentiment.

Although most of the Jewish Establishment dismisses today's anti-Semites as "aberrations" and "lunatics," these so-called deviates may be serving a definite purpose in American society. In the guise of "lunacy," they can act out anti-Semitic attitudes of those in power. Their expressions of overt anti-Semitism then reinforce the covert anti-Semitism that is present, but not expressed, in the attitudes wherein "closet anti-Semites" of varying degrees begin to express their own beliefs more openly, thus causing overt anti-Semitism to spiral.

For example, President Carter's brother Billy said during a reception given in February, 1979 by the Libyan delegation to the United Nations: "[American Jews] can kiss my ass as far as I'm concerned now." While President Carter is not his "brother's keeper," Billy's quasi-official status as a member of the President's immediate family gave his statement a certain air of authority. In the guise of a buffoon, he said what others were only thinking. It is more than likely that his bluntness encouraged others to express their own anti-Semitic attitudes.

Only this May, American tennis star Vitas Gerulaitis told reporters that linesman Lee Gould "should be put into a crematorium and burned to death." Gerulaitis' Lithuanian-born grandfather, Stasys Cenkus, now a permanent resident alien living in Howard Beach, NY, was Lithuanian Chief of the Secret Police, collaborating with Nazi Secret Police in Lithuania. Cenkus has been implicated in various Einsatzgruppen (mobile murder squads) actions against Lithuanian Jews in 1941-1943, including beatings, transports to death camps, and murders. The Soviet Union has condemned him to death in absentia for his war crimes.

There was some shock when General George Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speculated in a 1974 speech at Duke University that if the oil embargo led to "real suffering" on the part of Americans they "might get tough-minded enough to set down the Jewish influence in this country and break that

lobby." Saying that Jewish influence in Congress was strong, he continued, "Jews own, you know, the banks in this country, the newspapers..." Brown did not withdraw his remarks—or lose his job.

"Anti-Semitism is an insidious disease," wrote the ADL's Arnold Foster and Benjamin Epstein in 1974 in *The New Anti-Semitism*. "It can linger in the body politic almost invisibly for years without erupting. Its effects can be long delayed. Moreover, unless expunged it grows. Of all the ills of the world, anti-Semitism is the least likely to die a natural death."



This medal sold for \$1. at a NJ fleamarket.
The dealer said it brings in \$6, in the South.

A brief look at American history shows that from 1915 through the early 1940's, millions of Americans supported such blatantly anti-Semitic groups as Father Coughlin's Union for Social Justice, William Dudley Pelley's Silver Shirts, the Ku Klux Klan, the German-American Bund, Gerald L.K. Smith's Share-the-Wealth movement, and the America First Committee. The virulently anti-Semitic years

from 1915-1925 included the burgeoning of the KKK, Henry Ford's seven year anti-Semitic campaign in the *Dearborn Independent*, the beginnings of the quota system in Ivy League colleges and the restricting of immigration.

"Before 1944, a candidate for public office could make anti-Semitic remarks and win votes," recalled Emanuel Muravchik, director of the Jewish Labor Committee. "An anti-Semitic attitude was accepted then, and quite well-developed in the general public. After World War II, we entered a period of 'anti-Semitism.' I think we are no longer in that period—the anti-toxin is wearing off."

While it is true that a great deal of anti-Semitism has gone "underground" over the past 30 years, I sense a latent form, bubbling beneath the surface, ready to erupt. Will it happen here? Jewish Establishment "experts" tend to slough off this eventuality. One cynic familiar with the behind-the-scenes machinations of organized American Jewry has quipped: "The

major Jewish organizations say there's anti-Semitism here only when they feel the need to issue a press release or raise funds."

In fact, Jews who do consider anti-Semitism a threat are often labeled "paranoiac." Albin Vorspan, Vice President of the (Reform) Union of American Hebrew Congregations, told delegates at the annual plenary of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) in January, 1980, that Jews in America are now at their most successful and creative level, but they "live like they're on the brink of disaster," with insecurities that seem like "paranoia."

The Jews of pre-World War II Germany have been called members of a "cult of gratitude." Grateful for their place in German society, they shut their eyes. In a concerted effort to keep their upper-class status, they deluded themselves about Hitler and silently ignored the anti-Semitism that eventually overwhelmed Europe and destroyed its Jews.

The multitude of anti-Semitic manifestations in America today deserves more serious consideration by American Jewish leadership. Polls, platitudes and press releases cannot wipe away the anti-Semitism that is as prevalent as ever in the minds of *one-third of all Americans* (remember that Harris Poll). Nurtured by the conditions America is facing today—oil shortages, unemployment, inflation—these attitudes may gradually become translated into anti-Semitic action. And, should the situation become critical, the Jewish Establishment leadership may well be caught with their heads in the sand.

Lester Wolk

BLAMING JEWS FOR INVENTING PATRIARCHY

IDITH PLASKOW

There is a new myth developing in Christian feminist circles. It is a myth which tells us the ancient Hebrews invented patriarchy: before them the goddess reigned in maternal glory, and that after them Jesus tried to restore egalitarianism but was foiled by the persistence of Jewish attitudes within the Christian tradition. It is a myth, in other words, which perpetuates traditional Christianity's negative picture of Judaism by attributing sexist attitudes to Christianity's Jewish roots, at the same time maintaining that Christianity's distinctive contributions to the "woman question" are largely positive.

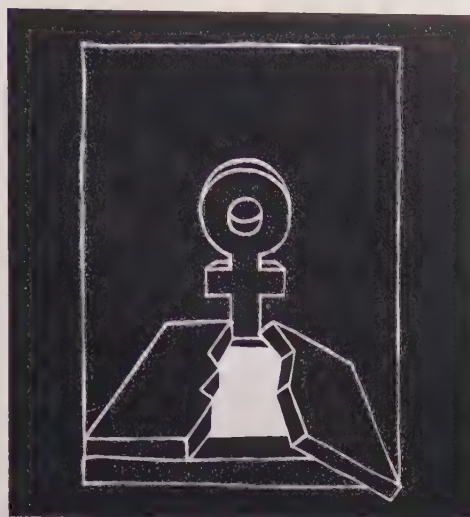
The consequence of this myth is that feminism is turned into another weapon in the Christian anti-Judaic arsenal. Christian feminism is a new slant to the old theme of Christian superiority, a theme rooted in the New Testament and since reiterated by countless Christian theologians.

Invidious comparisons between Judaism and Christianity most often appear in one particular context in feminist work. Writers exploring the Jewish background of Jesus' attitudes toward women frequently exaggerate the plight of women in Judaism in order to make Jesus' position stand out more positively in contrast. If Jewish women are unclean vessels, then Jesus' treatment of them must be revolutionary. "Jesus was a feminist," as Bernard Swidler put it.

Understanding Jesus' relations with women in the historical context of contemporary Judaism is surely a legitimate and important task. But many feminist accounts of Jesus' Jewish milieu suffer from three serious scholarly errors or oversights which are rooted in biased views of Jesus' Jewish origins.

First of all, a number of discussions of Jewish attitudes towards women use the Talmud or passages from it to establish the role of Jewish women in Jesus' time. The Talmud, however, is a compilation of Jewish law and custom which was not given final form until the sixth century. Passages in it may be much later or at least reflect reworkings of earlier material. But this can be determined only on the basis of painstaking scholarly sifting of individual texts. Such sifting clearly has not been done by authors who can blithely refer to the whole Talmudic tractate *Sabbath* as contemporary with Christ or who can say that certain taboos against women were incorporated into the Talmud "and from there passed on to Christianity."

Similarly, references to rabbinic customs or sayings as contemporary with Jesus also reflect a misunderstanding of the development of Judaism. The Rabbinate emerged as an institution only after the fall of the Temple in 70 C.E.,



and it took considerable time before rabbinic authority was consolidated and came to represent more than a minority opinion within the Jewish community.

Secondly, it is deceptive to speak of rabbinic opinion, customs, or sayings as monolithic. Even if one assumes that the Talmud gives an accurate picture of Jesus' Jewish background, the Talmud is at least as ambivalent as the New Testament on the subject of women. Yet writers dealing with Jewish attitudes towards women often select only the most negative rabbinic passages on the topic. Their treatment of Judaism is analogous to conservative Christian arguments for the subordination of women which quote only certain verses from Paul. Perhaps the most egregious instance of this type of distortion of Jewish tradition is Virginia Mollenkott's statement that "the Rabbis" would have been shocked and alienated by Christian belief in the mutual love and service of husband and wife. Is she speaking of "the Rabbis" who said "Love your wife as yourself, honor her more than yourself," or "If your wife is small, stoop and whisper in her ear?" Certainly, there are many dreadful rabbinic sayings about the relationship between husband and wife, but there are also a large number of precepts celebrating the joys of a loving match. And if the negative statements influenced Jesus and the New Testament authors (a questionable assumption!), then the positive ones must have as well.

The third error frequently made by feminist scholars is more subtle. It lies in comparing the words and attitudes of an itinerant preacher with laws and sayings formulated in the rarefied atmosphere of rabbinic academies. Many discrepancies between Jesus and "the Rabbis" on the subject of women can be explained by the fact that Jesus was constantly in contact with real women, speaking to and about them in the context of concrete situations. Rabbinic discussions about women, on the other hand, were often largely theoretical, taking place in institutions where no women were present. Where we do have rabbinic stories of actual male/female interaction, we find that rabbis

too—whatever their ideological statements—were capable of reacting to women as persons. The often-quoted story of Jesus' compassion for the woman taken in adultery (John 7:53ff), for example, finds a parallel in a rabbinic anecdote told of Rabbi Meir. A man became so angry at his wife for staying out late attending Meir's sermons that he vowed to bar her from the house unless she spat in Meir's face. Meir, hearing of this, sent for the woman and told her that his eyes were sore and could be cured only if a woman spat on them. The woman was then able to go home and tell her husband that she had spit on Meir seven times. The theological point of this story is not the same as the New Testament one. But it is not very different in showing a rabbi react with concern and sympathy for the trials of an ordinary woman.

These deficiencies in feminist scholarship are serious, and they suggest the need for major revisions in the treatment of Jesus' Jewish background. Required, first of all, is honest, balanced, non-polemical discussion of those texts which are in fact contemporary with Jesus. Such discussion should take into account variations in Jewish practice in different areas of the ancient world as well as differences in the setting and audience of Jewish and Christian material. Only when Christian feminists have deepened their understanding of Judaism can they honestly evaluate the uniqueness or non-uniqueness of Jesus' attitudes towards women.

At the same time that Jesus' milieu is being reevaluated, the Talmudic rabbis ought to be compared with their true contemporaries—the Church Fathers.

Admittedly, this task is less rewarding than comparison of the Talmud with Jesus: examination of rabbinic and patristic attitudes towards women leaves neither Christians nor Jews much room for self-congratulation. Rather, what is immediately striking is the similarity between the two traditions—in both, the developing association of women with sexuality and the fear of woman as temptress. Christianity compensates for the image of the temptress with that of virgin; Judaism, with the good wife with whom sex is permitted and even encouraged. But while these images saddle women with different disabilities and provide them with different opportunities, it would be difficult, and certainly pointless, to label one superior to the other.

The persistence of biased presentations of Judaism in feminist work is disturbing. But were sloppy scholarship the only issue at stake in feminist anti-Judaism, it could easily be corrected. Much more important, the popularity of such research indicates a profound failure of the feminist ethic. The morality of patriarchy, Mary Daly argues, is characterized by "a failure to lay claim to that part of the psyche that is then projected onto 'the Other.'" Throughout the history of Western thought, women, blacks, and other oppressed groups have had attributed to them as their nature human traits which men could or would not

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BLAMING JEWS

BY ANNETTE DAUM

acknowledge in themselves. Sexuality, bodiliness, dependence, moral and intellectual failure were all peculiarities which belonged to everyone except ruling class males. The feminist ethic, in contrast to this, is supposedly an ethic of wholeness, an ethic based on the withdrawal of projection and the recognition that the full humanity of each of us embraces those despised characteristics patriarchy ascribed to a host of "Others."

Christian feminist anti-Judaism, however, represents precisely the continuation of a patriarchal ethic of projection. Feminist research projects onto Judaism the failure of the Christian tradition unambiguously to renounce sexism. It projects onto Judaism the "backsliding" of a tradition which was to develop sexism in new and virulent directions. It thus allows the Christian feminist to avoid confronting the failures of her/his own tradition. This is the real motive behind biased presentations of Jesus' Jewish background: to allow the feminist to present the "true" Christian tradition as uniquely free from sexism. Otherwise, why not present positive Jewish sayings about women along with the negative ones? The former are just as conspicuous as the latter in English anthologies of rabbinic thought. And why not compare the Talmud with the Fathers instead of Jesus? Clearly, because that would not permit as dramatic a contrast between the two traditions.

The "Other" who is the recipient of these projections is, of course, the same Other who has received the shadow side of the Christian self since the beginnings of the Christian tradition. Feminists should know better! During the period when witch persecutions were at their peak, witches and Jews were the Church's interchangeable enemies. When the Inquisition ran out of Jews, it persecuted witches—and vice versa. This fact alone should alert feminists to the need to examine and exorcise a form of projection which bears close resemblances to misogyny. But besides this, what Other is more truly a part of the Christian than the Jew. Where should the withdrawal of projection begin than with Judaism. Yet women who are concerned with the relation between feminism and every other form of oppression are content mindlessly to echo traditional Christian attitudes towards Judaism.

The purpose of these criticisms of feminist scholarship is not to suggest that traditional Jewish attitudes towards women are praiseworthy. Of course, they are not. But Christian attitudes are in no way essentially different. They are different in detail, and these differences are extremely interesting and worthy of study. But weighed in the feminist balance, both traditions must be found wanting—and more or less to the same degree. The real tragedy is that the feminist revolution has furnished one more occasion for the projection of Christian failure onto Judaism. It ought to provide the opportunity for transcending ancient differences in the common battle against sexism. □

- Christ, Carol P. and Judith Plaskow, Eds.: *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (Harper & Row, 1979).
- Engelsman, Joan Chamberlain: *The Feminine Dimension of the Divine* (Westminster Press, 1979).
- Goldenberg, Naomi R.: *Changing of the Gods* (Beacon Press, 1979).
- Ochs, Carol: *Behind the Sex of God* (Beacon Press, 1977).
- Patai, Raphael: *The Hebrew Goddess* (Ktav, 1967; pap.: Avon, 1978).
- Ruether, Rosemary and Eleanor McLaughlin, Eds.: *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian traditions* (Simon and Schuster, 1979).
- Starhawk: *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion and the Great Goddess* (Harper & Row, 1979).
- Stone, Merlin: *When God Was a Woman* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978).
- Strober, Gerald S.: *Portrait of the Elder Brother* (American Jewish Committee, 1972).
- Swidler, Leonard: *Biblical Affirmations of Women* (Westminster Press, 1979).

There has been an explosion of exploration by feminists seeking alternatives to theologies rooted in and reflecting the male experience. These 10 works, and most especially the two anthologies—*Women of Spirit and Womanspirit Rising*—provide a diversity of religious options while making obvious the differing agendas of the reformists and the revolutionaries.

The reformists, mostly Christian feminists, are examining their heritage, researching and reconstructing the past in an effort to remove layers of sexism in religion and to uncover what they regard as the essential core of their traditions. While rejecting any misogyny within their faith, they remain loyal to their religion, seeking change from within the system.

The revolutionary feminists reject such loyalty, considering all religious tradition irredeemably sexist, and turn to other sources in their search for spirituality. Some, seeing divinity within women, seek new symbols, new rituals based on women's experiences, dreams, fantasies and literature. Others, seeking freedom from the past, are returning to ancient symbols of womanspirit such as witchcraft (*The Spiral Dance*) and Goddess worship. Some even suggest that a modern form of polytheism is necessary to reflect the diversity of imagery. Still others offer Jungian psychology as a replacement for religion, although Naomi Goldenberg warns in *Changing of the Gods* that this system supports stereotyped notions of masculine and feminine.

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A common thread weaves through this diversity of material: Judaism is singled out by many feminists—reformists and revolutionaries, religious and anti-religious—as the source of society's sexism.

In their desire to prove that Christianity is not innately sexist, some Christian feminists have all too often unintentionally but unquestioningly incorporated the anti-Semitic prejudices of Christian male theologians of the past. References abound in their works purporting to trace the sexism of Christianity to its Jewish heritage. Paul's negative statements about women are attributed to his Jewish heritage, while Jesus is depicted as standing in opposition to Jewish society in his support of women.

Even Leonard Swidler, who acknowledged in *Biblical Affirmations of Women* that Jesus was "an observant, Torah-true Jew... standing very much in the Jewish, Pharisaic tradition of his day," claims that Jesus was unique among his peers in his positive attitudes towards women. Not even Jesus' expressions of concern for the widowed, long a part of prophetic tradition, are attributed to his Jewish heritage.

The term "Judeo-Christian heritage" crops up again and again in these books, as if Judaism and Christianity were one. This simplistic usage ignores the fact that Jews and Christians do not share a unified common historical experience, nor do we interpret in the same way the Scripture that we do share. Judaism and Christianity are not monolithic in their treatment of women and also discriminate against women in different ways. The sexism in Christianity, therefore, cannot be attributed solely to its Jewish roots, as many of these authors do.

The old Christian charge of Deicide, that the Jews murdered God incarnate in the ultimate masculine body form of Jesus Christ—projected in recent times by many denominations—is now being resurrected by some revolutionary feminists in different form: the accusation that the Hebrew people were responsible for the destruction of the ultimate feminine deity, the Goddess.

Merlin Stone, in *When God Was a Woman*, describes the Hebrews as ruthlessly suppressing Goddess worship with the monotheistic male Hebrew deity:

"Into the laws of the Levites was written the destruction of the worship of the Divine Ancestress, and with it the final destruction of the matrilineal system."

While acknowledging that the elimination of Goddess worship started long before the appearance of the Hebrew people and continued until the last Goddess temple was destroyed by the Christians in the fifth century, C.E., Stone fails to note (as Raphael Patai does) that monotheism involved the destruction of all idolatry of both male and female deities.

This charge of Goddess-murder has been added to the feminist arsenal of accusations against the Hebrew people.

The most blatant distortion of Judaism

When feminists apply modern standards of equality to the beliefs and practices of ancient Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the revered model figure who demands justice even from God, is derided by some Christian feminists as despotic for behavior that recent archeological evidence indicates was probably customary for the times in that milieu.

No re-evaluation by feminists has had a more negative impact than that regarding the *Akedah*, the Binding of Isaac. Referring to this as the "Sacrifice of Isaac" reveals the bias in the focus. Stone acknowledges that testing divine powers in connection with the revelation of moral truth was common to many cultures, but interprets the *Akedah* solely as a test of blind obedience, missing the meaning in Judaism as in Christianity and representing the ultimate patriarchal expression of religion:

"The meaning of the test is that Abraham must prove his allegiance under the new patriarchal system. . . . In order to prove that Abraham is not rooted in the older [matriarchal] tradition, God demands that he renounce the most fundamental tenet of the matriarchal religion and kill his own child."

She understands the rite of circumcision, also common to surrounding cultures, as a substitute for child-sacrifice, but fails to note that this ritual, which seals the covenant relationship in Judaism, is consistent with the requirement that Abraham and his descendants obey God and refrain from child-sacrifice.

Neither Stone nor Ochs considers the significance of God's dramatic intervention to prevent the sacrifice of Isaac. According to Jewish tradition, the crucial moral truth revealed is God's opposition to human sacrifice. This contrasts with Christian theological focus which depicts Christ as the "Lamb of God" whose sacrifice is required.

The information Stone provides about Judaism is selectively judgmental. She describes "shocking" Biblical laws regarding virginity before marriage but applies no such pejorative adjective to describe ancient sacred sexual rites associated with Goddess worship in pre-Biblical times—which included the ritual sacrifice of an annual male consort of the High Priestess. She further suggests that eventually other rituals such as castration, were substituted for human sacrifice, indicating also that men may have made themselves eunuchs to serve as attendants to the High Priestess. She exhibits no dissonance or concern about these practices, which could surely be considered more abhorrent by modern standards than the requirement of pre-marital virginity by females.

Some feminists have fallen into ancient masculine anti-Semitic traps unworthy of their scholarship. Stone perceives the myth of Adam and Eve as an assault upon Goddess religion

and thus, by inference, the basis of women's debasement. And Ochs, in what is perhaps the ultimate expression of Christian feminist chauvinism, portrays Mary as a goddess figure—and as the antithesis of Eve:

"Through Eve all women are cursed and through Mary all women are blessed. . . . Mary through her gift of Jesus. . . . restores humankind to its sinless state."

While the popular notion among many Christians attributes the subjugation of women to the Eve/apple story from Hebrew Scriptures, new research by Biblical scholars indicates that such an interpretation is unjustified and that the original meaning of the text is egalitarian.

Stone regards both Judaism and Christianity as anti-sexual, but attributes this solely to Hebrew culture and disregards entirely the impact of Hellenistic emphasis on body/mind dualism. However, Rosemary Ruether, the Christian feminist co-editor of *Women of Spirit*, correctly calls attention to the profound effect of this philosophy on the development of sexism in Christianity. Hellenistic philosophy equated the human body with carnal impulses, regarded it as evil, and associated with women; it placed these attributes on a lower level than the intellectual and spiritual realm, which was reserved for men by men. Ruether more carefully identifies Christianity as the heir of this philosophy, of neo-Platonism and "apocalyptic Judaism."

She sees the ascetic movement in Catholicism as a liberating force for women, offering them options of freedom from unwelcome marriages and providing them with the opportunity to lead a holy life of greater independence, self-development and study. This was achieved at the price of their sexuality.

Another pitfall many of these authors fall into is their tendency to interpret Hebrew Scriptures in the worst possible light and to contrast this interpretation with the most positive evaluation of the New Testament.

Even Elizabeth Fiorenza, Associate Professor of Theology at Notre Dame, who calls on the Church in her piece in *WomanSpirit Rising* to "abandon all forms of sexism" as it has "publicly repented of its anti-Semitic theology," falls victim. She claims that the baptismal formula in *Galatians* 3:28, which states that for all who have accepted Christ, "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female" demonstrates Christianity's egalitarian commitment, and she offers conclusive evidence of women's participation in the early Church. Many scholars, however, see the verse in *Galatians* as a reference to the hope that social discrimination will cease in the next world.

Fiorenza compares that verse to what she describes as "accepted social discrimination in the Judaism and Hellenism of the times." She bases this conclusion on the similarity of prayers thanking God for being human, not beasts; Jews, not heathens; free, not slaves; men, not women.

Her comparison, however, is between different categories of writing. The New Testament, sacred to all Christians, is contrasted with one minor prayer designed not for synagogue use, but as an optional private prayer for the home. And, indeed, only one group of Jews—Orthodox males—include this prayer in their liturgy today (Reform Judaism rejected it and Conservative Judaism eliminated it), a fact apparently unknown to Stone who states, without qualification, that this prayer is still recited by Hebrew males every day.

While no amount of apologia can eliminate the underlying chauvinism of this traditional prayer, a better comparison could be made between *Galatians* and Jewish writings of an equally sacred nature. *Genesis* 1:27—a revolutionary statement of principle that men and women were created equal at the same time by God, in the image of God—would be a more valid comparison.

Stone and other feminist writers assert that the position of ancient Israelite women was worse than that of women in surrounding cultures. Swidler also indicates that this position was worse during the end of the Second Temple Period, with further restrictions imposed upon women partially as a result of the increasing persecution of Jews by pagans and Christians after the destruction of the Second Commonwealth. These evaluations pose a challenge to the assertion by Jewish authorities that the position of Jewish women was superior to that of other cultures.

The question of what is truth and what apologia will haunt us until more Jewish feminist scholars devote time and energy to the painstaking job of research. Historically denied access to education in Torah and Talmud, Jewish women have very few scholars equipped to challenge and remove centuries of sexist translation, interpretation, commentary and customs.

Jewish feminists are caught in a dilemma. Most of the research reviewed here has been conducted by Christian women who have a long history of involvement in scholarship within their faith groups. We owe our Christian counterparts a tremendous debt of gratitude for their pioneering work in developing feminist insights into Scripture which enhance our personhood as women. But there also is deep resentment that these same insights threaten our personhood as Jews.

This new feminist theology, which unfortunately incorporates old anti-Semitism, will be taught to generations of Christians to come unless there is open conversation between Jewish and Christian feminists, free of diatribe or polemic, to bridge the gap in understanding and foster a joint unbiased approach to Biblical interpretation in the future. Only when we can openly acknowledge that neither Judaism nor Christianity has lived up to its expressed ideals in the treatment of women will we be able to unite in our demand for justice in the name of God who demands justice for all. □

FEMINISTS AND FAITH

A DISCUSSION WITH JUDITH PLASKOW AND ANNETTE DAUM

LILITH: Let's pick up on the article about Christian feminist anti-Semitism. Where, precisely, is it occurring? Among which elements in the church?

PLASKOW: First let me describe the two levels we're dealing with. The level that I know is the level of women scholars in academia doing feminist research. There's also a very strong level of lay church organization, where I think the scholarship filters down in a more popular way—that's where I see the real problems lying. In other words, the women who are doing exciting feminist scholarship are not coming out with this anti-Semitic stuff. I think the level on which misinterpretation is taking place is the level of popular scholarship, the level that could be preached in the churches. The whole "Jesus is a feminist" thing is rooted in one article by Leonard Swidler [author of *Women and Judaism* and *Biblical Affirmations of Women*]. He has a theory that every religion was initially open and receptive to women and then fell away as it developed. He wrote a five-page popular article in *Catholic World* which has been quoted widely, from which other people, who also are not scholars, pick up his argument, parrot it; it's carried on, then it's picked up by the church task forces on changes in liturgy and on opening up the ministry to women. They use it to speak to women in their churches, to get them to become feminists because, after all, "Jesus was a feminist."

LILITH: Do you think this is a way of "using" feminism to get them back to the church?

PLASKOW: No, I think it's a way of using Jesus to bring people to feminism, and using the "Jesus was a feminist" argument to legitimize feminism in the eyes of other Christian women and men.

DAUM: And to bring about change in the church. In other words, the purpose has nothing to do with Judaism and is not anti-Semitic; the anti-Semitism comes in because they've all been brought up on church teachings which were anti-Semitic. I think it's ironic that these women, the most vocal and activist in the church, may inadvertently be perpetuating anti-Semitism at the same time that their own denominations are trying to eradicate this bias. In the last 15 years, Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches, among others, have in one way or another officially repudiated anti-Semitism as un-Christian. However, while the process of

developing appropriate educational material and new translations has started, the old bias may still persist until the changeover is completed. Many of these women simply haven't examined the old bias, so it just comes in without any thought.

PLASKOW: It also comes in their interpretation of Jesus himself, not just in how he treated women, but in his being opposed to Jewish authorities and the Jewish milieu in which he was raised. In other words, they're taking the whole Law/Gospel dichotomy and giving it a new twist: Judaism was negative towards women/Jesus treated women as equals.

DAUM: In the same way that the old Christian interpretation that he was opposed to the Pharisees and the authorities, and everything that he did ostensibly was against the abuses he saw within Judaism. Basically, the thrust of the new scholarship is that Jesus was probably a Pharisee. You don't compare what Jesus had to say to the Bible, you compare it to Rabbinic statements.

PLASKOW: No, no! You compare Rabbinic statements with the church fathers; you compare Jesus with the very meager—and this is the problem—contemporary Jewish literature.

LILITH: Let me see if I have this clear. When Judaism was being attacked by Christian popular scholars in the past, it was on a whole lot of things: the money-lenders in the Temple, the strict, rigid interpretation of the Torah which Jesus rejected. Now it's sort of moved on to "Judaism is bad because of its treatment of women."

PLASKOW: —because Jesus rejected the contemporary Jewish attitude towards women.

LILITH: So in a way Jesus is used as an organizing tool.

PLASKOW: Yes, exactly. . . . Part of the problem with Swidler is his assumption that Jesus as depicted in the Gospels is what Jesus was, which modern scholarship rejects.

LILITH: You think that Christian feminists accept this fundamentalist view?

DAUM: Yes, that's exactly what's happening. My assumption is that they're simply unaware of the new scholarship, which clearly in-

dicates that a lot of the so-called "facts" that in the Gospels are simply not true.

PLASKOW: What the Gospels reflect is teaching and the belief of the early church. Insofar as in fact Jesus did treat women as equals in the Gospels—and in fact there's nothing in the Gospels from Jesus supporting the subordination of women—then this must indicate something about the position of women in the early church, if not what Jesus thought. So I think what is valid here is how Jesus is depicted as having an egalitarian relationship with women.

DAUM: To a certain extent, yes, but the Apostles weren't women. When it comes down to where the power is, it wasn't with women.

PLASKOW: That's right. There's a radical break for this period.

DAUM: Precisely. The feminist movement within Christianity is trying to depict Jesus as a radical who was opposed to the Judaism of his times, who was opposed to the Roman authorities. But there's nothing in the Gospels that indicates an opposition to the Roman authorities either! My feeling—and this is just a gut emotional reaction—is that Jesus may not have been treating women any differently from the way others did in the Jewish culture around him. That, as modern scholarship indicates, what Jesus did and said were not so far removed from the Jewish milieu in which he grew up as a nice Jewish boy. If enough scholarship were applied, the same thing would probably show up in his treatment of women. We are beginning to uncover information that women were involved in the same kinds of ways in Judaism as Gospel accounts indicate they were involved with the Church in the time of Jesus.

PLASKOW: Actually, if we're talking about movements within the Judaism of the period and their attitudes towards women, Jesus is evidence for Judaism's positive attitude towards women! The whole "Jesus was a feminist" argument depends on an extremely negative depiction of the Jewish background, because the only way to depict him as a radical is that is, as overthrowing tradition—is to depict the tradition as negatively as possible. Because despite the evidence that he in no way reinforced patriarchy, there's also no evidence that he did anything radical to overthrow it. So the only way you can make that argument is by depicting Judaism negatively.

LILITH: You say that the only way to show Jesus as a radical is to show that the Judaism of his period was horrible to women. But why is it necessary to show Jesus as a radical?

PLASKOW: To justify feminism within the church in the present time.

LILITH: Why couldn't it just be said, "Jesus grew out of the spirit of his era . . ."?

PLASKOW: Because we're talking about a very conservative strand of Christian feminism. The people who are using this argument are Christian feminists who cannot bring themselves to say, "Look, basically all of religion is patriarchal and we need to start from ground zero and create the changes that we who are contemporary women see a need to be made." This approach is coming from people who need to justify themselves in terms of tradition.

LILITH: They seem to be conservative, but they're feminists?

PLASKOW: They need to show that feminism is Christian!

DAUM: You find the same thing in Judaism. You know the line: "Judaism has always put women in an honored place . . ."

LILITH: Are the Christian feminists who use this pop scholarship aware of its anti-Semitic bias?

PLASKOW: People hear the anti-Semitism in the "Jesus was a feminist" argument, there's a question about it. When I teach students—when students read "Jesus was a feminist"—they give back on exams that Judaism is terrible and Jews treated women as chattels and that Jesus came and changed all that. However, the vast majority of the people who are using these arguments are not anti-Semites; they are shocked and horrified when you bring this to their attention. I think that our obligation is to make Christian women aware of the fact that they're not examining the Christian religion's traditional anti-Judaism, using it once again without thinking—albeit for a very noble purpose. I also hope that in attacking the religion of Christian anti-Semitism on the feminist issue that we may be able to open Christian feminists to an awareness of Christian anti-Semitism as a wider issue, which is to our advantage as Jewish feminists.

DAUM: I have other concerns about this kind of thrust: it again devalues Judaism. And if anything were going to be said about the treatment of male and female, that there's no recognition either of the concept within Judaism—*Genesis 1:27*—that male and female were created by God at the same time in the image of God. That's a revolutionary principle. There's no recognition of that when the starting point is Jesus, and everything before was "bad." Another problem I have with this argument is that it is divisive of women who are feminists. Within each of our faith groups we are a minority, and many of the problems we face are common problems. Many of the solutions that we have developed, independently of one another, are common solutions. And we should be joining forces to make both Christianity and Judaism responsive to women and to women's needs. And this will separate us and keep us from working together.

LILITH: Do you think that, politically, there is any utility in Christian and Jewish women working together?

PLASKOW: I'll tell you why it's to our advantage right now: because the Christian women are ten years ahead of us in the questions they're asking. They're raising the fundamental questions about sexism in the tradition which we have not begun to raise.

LILITH: Wait a minute! You said before that the "Jesus was a feminist" movement is based on the idea that Jesus overthrew the bad Jewish patriarchy. And now you say that Christian feminists are asking the fundamental questions—

PLASKOW: We're talking about different women. Also, remember that within the Christian evangelical community there's a real split. There's the whole Christian right—anti-choice and anti-ERA; but there's also a Christian evangelical left—which is saying that Jesus was basically a radical, that he came to overthrow the structures of the culture in which he lived, and a part of this was overthrowing the role of women—but they're saying this within the context of a very conservative Christianity.

LILITH: What do you think are the crucial questions that Christian feminists, the ones who are at the cutting edge, are directing themselves to that Jewish feminists are not?

PLASKOW: Women in Judaism who are

concerned with *halacha* (Jewish law) have raised questions about specific *halachot* (laws). We have not raised the question: "Is the whole concept of *halacha* opposed to feminism which seems to foster the individual growth, development and self-actualization of contemporary women in our own period? Why do we need to look back to some two thousand years of law, particularly law written by men, instead of consulting our modern experience and constructing a religious tradition out of our own particular needs?" One of the most important things Mary Daly [*Beyond God the Father; Gyn/Ecology*] ever said is that "women have had the power of naming stolen from us." And that "we have to begin to speak our own words." And to me that's what feminism is about: women beginning to speak forth our own experience as women, and uniting as women to speak forth our own experience and to bring it out of each other. But then what does that do with another system of experience, namely *halacha* over there, speaking for the male Jewish experience? Where do the two intersect? Do they intersect? That's one question that we haven't yet raised. Second, we haven't really raised the question of God-language and God-imagery in a profound and thorough way.

DAUM: You really can't be a feminist and relate to God as "He." I've begun to do some research on concepts of God, and I certainly have come to the conclusion that, even within ancient Judaism, God had both masculine and feminine elements.

LILITH: Where are the feminine elements?

PLASKOW: Isaiah: "Like as a mother comforteth her children, so does God comfort you, O house of Israel . . ." Moses, turning to God in the wilderness when he's angry at the people at one point, and saying, "Did I conceive this people? Did I bring them forth, that Thou should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries a sucking child?'" A third question (which to me is the most interesting one) is addressed by Rosemary Ruether [Ed., *Religion and Sexism; New Woman/New Earth; Faith and Fratricide*]. She sees mind/body dualism as the fundamental problem within the Christian tradition that has led to its profound misogyny. Jewish feminists have not asked, is there a mind/body dualism within Judaism in the same sense, and what are the implications of this for the image of women? What does it mean that

woman in Judaism is imaged as a temptress? Is this the same as the Christian image of temptress, is it functioning the same way, is it functioning differently? Do Jews also see women as "the body" and as completely identified with the material world? And if so, well, what role do we have then as *Jews* spiritually within the tradition? We have been taught that within Judaism there is no body/mind dichotomy. Yet the question of women's sexuality has clearly been of tremendous concern within Jewish tradition and that question of sexuality in Judaism is one that I'm particularly concerned with, especially in contrast with or compared to women's role within Christianity. On some levels, a woman in Christianity certainly could pursue an intellectual career, devoting herself to the religion *per se* in ways that a Jewish woman could not [*i.e.*, as a nun—Ed].

DAUM: There should be applause for the fact that a woman could more easily and more precisely pursue that kind of a role within Christianity than she could within Judaism. But there was a price to pay for it: she had to give up her sexuality. And what's not seen or not discussed or not even revealed for people to be reading about is that within Judaism we have to give some applause for the fact that there was a recognition of woman and her sexual needs, and that those sexual needs had to be met—that was Jewish law, and there has to be applause for that, too.

PLASKOW: One of the reasons we need to talk to each other is precisely that what's been valuable in each tradition is so different. And when you present to students what was going on in each tradition, how do you weigh them? Was it better to have the choice to become a nun but to have to give up your sexuality, or was it better to know that you had no chance of getting into the religious life but had status in the family?

LILITH: Is it better for a man to be considered not a whole person *unless* he was married—or to be considered not a whole person if he *was* married?

DAUM: All that has to be discussed, and I, frankly, feel that the best kind of exploration is for us to be doing this together.

LILITH: How is that possible if Christian feminists are ten years ahead of us?

PLASKOW: When we're talking about the cutting edge of Christian theology, we're talk-

ing about a handful of people who are asking the really exciting, important and radical questions. And then others who are carrying it along. It wouldn't take us that long to catch up if we could have half a dozen people emerging who had skills and courage—and other people who were willing to deal with the questions.

LILITH: *Why* are the Christian feminists ten years ahead of us in dealing with these issues?

PLASKOW: One answer is very simple. When I began Yale in '68, I was one of three students there who did not have a B.D. degree as a prerequisite for entry. Traditionally, a seminary degree has been a prerequisite for getting a doctorate in religion, and women have just started being admitted to the Reform and Reconstructionist seminaries. And Protestant women have a slightly longer history.

LILITH: How dangerous *is* the phenomenon of Christian feminist anti-Semitism if it goes unchecked? How important is it in the light of all the other different kinds of anti-Semitism—the economy, the recession, the tradition of anti-Semitism generally?

PLASKOW: What's important about it to me is that I hope that Christian feminists will be my allies as a Jew if there is a general outbreak of anti-Semitism in this country. And it frightens me that, instead, feminism may become an excuse for *oppressing* me as a Jew.

DAUM: Feminism may become another weapon to hang the Jews.

PLASKOW: Yes. I don't think it's more important than any other weapon. It's just that I hope that feminists sensitive to their oppression as women will be sensitive to the oppression of Jews. One of the issues I raise in my article [*see p. 11*] is that feminists understand that women have been seen as the primary Other; all other forms of hatred are ultimately modeled on the basic alienation between men and women, and therefore, if men and women are reconciled, all other forms of hatred will melt away. But Christian feminist anti-Semitism is proving that that isn't true. And that's sad. Christian feminists are confronting this whole phenomenon of projecting evil onto the Other, in relation to the situation of *women*. They're blaming the Jews; they're projecting misogyny onto the *Jews*. Instead of seeing women as the primary Other and saying, "Let's end the whole phenomenon of projection; let us accept

the evil as part of ourselves," they're making the Jews, who have always been the Other, the Other again.

LILITH: The reason for that may be confusion over where their prime identity is: Christians, or as feminists?

DAUM: Now let me tell you what I've found in terms of women in whatever group we find ourselves. And I find this replication among women who are Jews and women who are Black and who belong to Black organizations. We women have taken on the identity of the ethnic group to which we belong. Jewish women have taken on the agenda of the Jewish community rather than the feminist movement, and Black women have done the same with the Black community. The male leadership of both groups have led women to be their own enemies, rather than to see ourselves as the oppressed Other in both groups.

PLASKOW: But it's more complicated than that, because we cannot point to Jews and say, "They are the Other." *We are them*. It's not the same; it's like there's a double quality here that doesn't exist when there's a Christian projection of certain attributes onto Jews. We cannot let Jews be defined only as Jewish men.

DAUM: It's the same kind of problem if we identify only as Jews, and not as women, and they identify only as Christians and not as women. That's why they're taking on all the coloration of Christian anti-Semitism. What I find so sad is that most women are not even seeing the duality. It is "I'm a Jew/I'm a Christian," not "I am a woman who is Jewish and therefore I have problems that are different from Jewish men."

PLASKOW: There is that dual identity that we can't escape. I spent a year as a research associate in Women's Studies at the Harvard Divinity School (I think there was one other Jewish woman there that semester), hired to raise women's issues in the context of the Protestant Divinity School. I was working with Protestant and Catholic feminists who were wonderful women. And I survived that year because they're wonderful women. That was 1973, the year of the Yom Kippur War. There was a lot of anti-Semitic feeling—and a lot of indifference, also—within the Divinity School, and for a week I went around feeling like I was literally ripped in half. And the fact is, although I identify as a woman, I *am* a Jew and they are Christians; and they really didn't

a shit whether Israel was destroyed or not, I did.

DAUM: And it's because they also abided the male hierarchy's interpretation and tradition to Israel. Whereas what's needed is the kind of discussion that could only take place if we establish a relationship with each other.

PLASKOW: But I still think that, even if we identify first as women and establish a relationship with each other, that we still reach different points when we will have come out of different experiences, different communities, and we disagree—and that will be okay, because we allow each other to be who we are.

LILITH: There's another feminist argument: that women are a caste and everything is irrelevant. That fact that we were born Jewish or Christian is totally irrelevant, because these are all patriarchies different in kind, not in kind. So what does it matter if a man is Jewish or Christian or Moslem; we don't get together and throw off everything. The past is not relevant to us.

DAUM: Then what are you left with?

LILITH: That may be the source of the fear: that it's going too far."

PLASKOW: It seems to me that everyone asks the fundamental questions steps to the border at some point or another.

LILITH: Didn't Mary Daly, who ended up leaving the Church, walk over that border?

PLASKOW: Mary Daly walked over that border. Some people walk over, and some people stop, and some people walk back. But the point to get to the border is very frightening. It is the challenge.

DAUM: I can only tell you where I am at the moment: I am a woman, but my heritage is Jewish. I am a Jewish woman—or a woman who is Jewish, depending on where you want to put the emphasis. Some days it's on being a woman who happens to be Jewish, and other days it happens in terms of the Jew as a woman. It depends on the day and the problem that I'm facing at that particular moment. I'm concerned for those people who have stepped over the border and refuse to recognize that that's part of your identity.

LILITH: Why?

DAUM: Because that's a rejection of part of who you are. That doesn't mean that you have to like it, but I think there has to be an acceptance. To me it's like a Black woman saying, "I'm not Black any more." She may not like it, but she is.

LILITH: But that's not the same as a Protestant woman saying, "I'm not Protestant any more." Although Sister Ann Patrick Ware has said that it is impossible for her to divest herself of her Catholicism, that is as much a part of her, in terms of her heritage or ethnicity, as we feel that Jewishness is with us.

PLASKOW: But once we step to that border and say, "Ah, yes, I am a Jew"—what does it mean?

LILITH: We have been talking for years about what is a Jew.

PLASKOW: But now we have to ask it as feminists. We haven't asked it yet as feminists. We've asked it from every other perspective—

LILITH: One thing about Judaism that I find most appealing is that it's a religion that celebrates life. Christianity seems to celebrate death. How are we supposed to have a dialogue as feminists, coming out of that?

PLASKOW: It's true that generally, there may be more focus on death in Christianity than there is within Judaism. But there is diversity within Christianity, and there are many denominations that are moving toward—moved in the past, certainly in the Sixties—toward a more social activist kind of a thrust. It depends on whether you focus on the life of Jesus, or the Crucifixion, or the Resurrection. When you speak of Christianity and death, you're thinking of the dead man hanging on the cross, but if you think of the Resurrection, or you think of Jesus the radical—

DAUM: Or you think of the Sermon on the Mount or the social gospel—

PLASKOW: It is a question of focus, and it's also a question of different thrusts within different Christian denominations. Certainly the women who are in the feminist movement are not the ones who don't care about what's going on on earth! And they're very worried about the dead man hanging from the cross; they talk about it a lot. After all, *their* God came down to earth incarnate in human *male* form. They have worse problems than we do.

Some of them say, "Forget it, we can't deal with it. We'll have to leave tradition"; some of them say, "After all, this man was a male, but he had male-female characteristics, and he was a loving male, and he had many of the characteristics that we associate with women." And some of them say that there's a difference between the historical Jesus, who happened to be a man, and the teaching of the Church. They have as much diversity within the Church and are as free to argue with other.

LILITH: A point to remember, because I think that Jews generally don't know about that.

DAUM: No, we don't. And they don't know about us.

LILITH: Can we be open with them and say, "Listen, there's a big battle going on here..."

PLASKOW: Sure. Why not? They have many of the same things happening in their own tradition.

DAUM: That's why discussion is so important. First, because of the cross-fertilization it enables. And second, it creates a climate in society that pushes us ahead that much faster. It creates a certain kind of psychological feeling within the people who are now in touch with a lot of other people who feel the same way that we do. We don't feel so isolated, we don't feel so alone, we don't feel as if we are out of touch with reality.

LILITH: So we generally agree that contact between Jewish feminists and Christian feminists is very important. Considering the fact that most Jews know very little about what's going on in the Christian world, isn't it possible that they may confuse the group of Christian feminist scholars doing very exciting research "on the cutting edge" with the conservative group who use this "Jesus is a feminist" argument, which has some anti-Semitism floating around there on the horizon, and lump them all together? Wouldn't that militate against any cross-fertilization process? Who wants to talk to a bunch of anti-Semites?

DAUM: That's precisely my concern. And that's why the first item on the agenda when we begin to talk to each other has got to be their anti-Semitism. They have to confront that before we can talk about anything else. □

SUE ELWELL

Ellen Sue Levi Elwell, who organized a conference on the future of Jewish feminism that preceded the 1979 Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education, teaches a course on Jewish Women at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. She is currently writing her dissertation on the National Council of Jewish Women.



In thinking about Jewish women in the year 2000, I find myself struggling to identify appropriate terms and categories for women's activities. Can the old terms suffice? Can one speak about roles and the relationships those roles imply? The phrase "a mother in Israel" echoes in my ears, yet how can a description that seems to imply a role limited to birth-giver and nurturer be used to indicate a future where woman's sphere of influence will no longer be bounded by the walls of her home?

The feminist concept of a woman giving birth to herself persistently recurs as I attempt to conjure our future as Jewish women, for I see the present as a time of great birth-pangs. The '70's have been a time of ferment for Jewish women: we seem to be actively involved in a search for ourselves, a search to identify sources of energy, and to discover sources of individual and collective strength. We are engaged in a birth process where we are the birth-givers, the new life, and the midwife and attendants as well. Through exploration into new spiritual and intellectual worlds, we are slowly facilitating the emergence of new women's energies, and discovering the power that comes with gaining competence in areas of Jewish thought previously closed to women. In addition, we are discovering ways to share these energies and skills, thus expanding the base of our power to all who are sensitive to its proper use, or possible abuse.

The process is painful, and despite our experience as birth-givers to others, the contractions of birthing ourselves, of locating an authentic identity in the Jewish tradition, are particularly difficult. Yet we are not the first to embark upon this most difficult of all journeys. Our historical mothers who struggled for recognition as Jews also traversed this dark canal, not knowing whether they would survive the perilous trip. Beruriah, Gluckel of Hameln, Henrietta Szold, even Golda Meir all

set out to discover themselves as Jews in arenas that were primarily the province of men. The experience of other mothers—Bertha Pappenheim, Ernestine Rose, Lillian Wald and Hannah Solomon—may speak even more directly to us, for their life energies were directed specifically towards women's preoccupations. In their lifetimes they served as spiritual and political midwives to many women who sought to discover themselves in worlds that were at best unsympathetic, and at worst hostile to their own concerns.

As we give birth to ourselves, we discover new meanings for motherhood, both in a personal and, ultimately, in a communal sense. As mothers and midwives to ourselves, we discover the secrets of motherhood that have been hidden as we have given birth only to others. Our experience as women becomes recognized and legitimate, and we see ourselves not only as enablers but as achievers, not only supporters of others but as agents of change. And finally, regaining control over biological motherhood enables us to transcend it, and to explore areas of motherhood that go beyond direct nurturing.

A woman who has a clear sense of herself as a Jew is better able to contribute to the Jewish community, by planning and executing programs that support but do not smother, that enable the achievements of others without requiring sacrifice. Such women become mothers in Israel by giving their best energies, whatever they may be, to the Jewish people as rabbis, as political leaders, as teachers, as administrators, as service workers, as models for the next generation by serving as an example of competence and compassion in their own lives.

Thus this birthing process, a process of pain mixed with joy, of fear and ecstasy, enables women to discover that we are our own best sources of inspiration and power. In giving birth to ourselves, we discover our links to the past as well as to the future, and expand our limited vision to include the future of the greater Jewish community. By transcending a definition of motherhood that limits our sphere of activity and circumscribes our power, we can discover a meaning of a mother in Israel that opens new vistas of study and service and fosters the full creative potential of Jewish women, now and in the years to come.

RELA GEFFEN MONSON

Dr. Rela Geffen Monson is Associate Professor of Sociology at Gratz College and National Education Coordinator for the Ramah camps. She is currently doing research on the Jewish identity of Jewish academics and the future of the synagogue in America.

The ideal future for Jewish women should be one in which sexism has become irrelevant. The concept of equal opportunity for both sexes will have been "mainstreamed," so that

the focus of Jewish activity for men and women will be the strengthening of the quality Jewish life in Israel and the diaspora communities. With large amounts of leisure time available to all, and shared work patterns, Jewish men and women will fill their non-work time with study and enjoyment and the creation of community through their contemporary interpretation of Torah and mitzvot.

It is important to consider what stands in the way of this ideal. What must be accomplished in the '80's and '90's if this vision of the year 2000 is to be meaningful? I believe the issues of equal access to synagogue participation and Jewish community leadership are on their way to solution. The major issues of the '80's and '90's lie in two areas which both disparate and inextricably linked: halachic (Jewish legal) reform—particularly areas of civil law affecting personal status; and relationships of Jewish men and women with the family, including socialization patterns of children.



These two issues are disparate because the solution to the first is legal in its essence and communal in its scope and the solution to the second one lies in primary group relationships which are unlegislated. They are linked because the halachic issues involved are those which govern family ties—the contractual nature of marriage, divorce, and widowhood and the designation of children as *mamzer* (bastards; in Jewish law, children born of "adulterous" union, e.g., one in which a woman has no *get* [religious divorce document] from a previous husband).

In order to effect the halachic *takkanot* (newly promulgated legal "amendments") necessary to amend personal status law and civil rights of women in court, it is crucial to pursue two paths simultaneously. The first is the raising up of a generation of women learned in law codes who will command respect of the community and will be able to confront the male *poskim* (legal arbiters) of the generation from a position of strength—demand solutions and/or offer their own. Educating and mobilizing a joint male and female constituency to prod and support enlightened *poskim* is the second necessary pursuit. It is only through a combination of caring Jewry and responsive legal authority

...during halachic evolution will take
 Socializing the children to become the base
 Such a constituency for the '90's will require
 enting in the '80's which heightens the
 areness in sons and daughters of the im-
 rality of sexism. This will be very difficult,
 ause the parents doing the socializing bear
 vestiges of their own conditioning. A
 scious effort is required to break stereo-
 es and myths about the way boys and girls
 men and women who are Jews behave.
 Although each family will make its own
 sions about its way of life and pattern of
 tionships, I believe that the norms rein-
 ced by the Jewish community will have an
 portant impact on the ease with which
 ilies experimenting with new models will
 dle the inherent tensions which will arise.
 mmunal structures and religious institutions
 d their leaders will have to support these
 n-sexist families.

Feminists should build power bases within
 blished structures—and avoid "queen bee"
 dromes and bring others into the system.
 alitions should be built with the elderly,
 h single parents, with young singles—so
 t all those often excluded from the establish-
 nt can work together to restructure it from
 hin. Another path is to create new institu-
 ns which will bring pressure from without
 the established communal structures as the
 urah movement has already done.

All of these efforts will not only bring
 out the aims of Jewish feminists but will also
 ar the way for us to get on with the building
 a vibrant Jewish community for the year
 2000.

G. WOLFE

G. Wolfe retired last year after being on
 national staff of the American Jewish Com-
 tee since 1948. She has written widely on
 ects of prejudice, poverty and intergroup
 ations. She is the editor of *About 100 Books*,
 elected, annotated review of children's
 ks on intergroup relations themes, which
 e appeared in seven editions during the past
 years. She is the editor of *A Reader in Jewish
 mmunity Relations (Ktav)*, the first compil-
 on in the field of Jewish community rela-
 ns. Wolfe had national responsibility for the
 merican Jewish Committee's work in at-
 mpting to improve the level and status of
 men in the Jewish community.

We seem to have run out of words: they
 ve all been said, sometimes forcefully with
 otion; sometimes pleadingly; often bitterly.
 e issues and points of view about women's
 tus in the Jewish community are all in. Our
 ights continue to be reinforced as we remove
 e layer after another of our feminist and/or
 ish defenses. They reveal again the condi-
 n of isolation, the less-than-equal status and
 essential powerlessness of women who
 ve organizational ties to the Jewish com-
 munity.

I stress the organizational ties. For women
 o choose to have none, the problem is less
 ere. Many have given up on the Jewish
 mmunity. They move in the larger commu-
 nity, fighting for ERA, supporting NOW, atten-

ding meetings of groups where the issues of
 equality for women are pursued in various
 ways. Many yearn for a tie to the noble ethical
 and moral underpinnings associated with Jew-
 ish thought, and wonder why the Jewish com-
 munity seems immobilized in the area of wom-
 en's status.

Those of us who have not yet—or cannot
 ever—give up on the Jewish community are
 not encouraged. We seem to be on something
 of a treadmill—moving as if we were going for-
 ward, but finding, as we look at the passing
 scene, that the same clouds, the same hills, the
 same barriers keep appearing. We remain in fa-
 miliar territory: "Don't push too hard; wait un-
 til more women get into the pipeline; it's people
 like you who discourage our daughters from
 having babies," and more of the familiar pa-
 tronizing comments.



I am disturbed that the discussion of the fu-
 ture of the family is thrust on the women's
 movement, as if we have ever said that we
 were not concerned with our families. Why are
 we rediscovering the wheel? Our concern with
 family was one of the powerful forces that
 helped us see that the feminist movement is a
 liberating force not for women only but also
 for the men who share with women the life of
 the family. The discussion on the family as it
 is presently being formulated will leave us where
 we always were, dealing with the old stereo-
 typed agenda in which the men will be relieved
 of responsibility for change. Recently a new
 idea has been added that is gaining some popu-
 larity, suggested by male experts who assure us
 that they are on our side. Articles and so-called
 scholarly papers are appearing on the subject
 of "the psychology of women" in which the es-
 sential and superior quality of women as nur-
 turers is laid out with admiration and tender-
 ness. And women are urged to fulfill them-
 selves by organizing day care centers.

I hold out little hope that Jewish organiza-
 tions will see the light by themselves. The situa-
 tion of inequality remains pretty much the
 same. Does it matter that salaries of women
 professionals in Jewish communal agencies are
 consistently lower than men's in comparable
 positions?

Does it really make a difference that only
 3% of executive directors of Jewish agencies
 are women?

And what if women's organizations still
 take "ex officio" positions in community-wide
 structures?

It makes a difference, it does matter, and
 we do not need any psychological analyses to
 tell us why. Nor should we tolerate it.

But how to move the community?

It seems to me that our focus must remain

on the manifest behavior of the organized com-
 munity—men and women and leadership. We
 should continue to address ourselves to the in-
 equality and discrimination that women experi-
 ence. We should look at Jewish education with a
 feminist perspective. Sex-role stereotyping in
 program and personnel practices need to be
 pointed out to agencies which practice it.

We must direct our activities at two targets:
 the organized community with its glacial pow-
 er structure that resists change and the sharing
 of power; and those women searching for a
 connection to a feminist expression and Jewish
 involvement.

We in the women's movement have per-
 haps been focusing on the wrong target. It isn't
 women's organizations per se that should be
 fought. These groups are themselves the vic-
 tims, the products of the long Jewish separate-
 but-unequal history. One would hope to see
 more action in these organizations toward the
 achievement of the equality in power and deci-
 sion-making to which they are entitled. In time
 they will act, but until then they cannot be
 dragged into this most important social move-
 ment.

We do not need new structures. They will
 evolve when there is a change in the roles mem-
 bers of the community play. Women's auxilia-
 ries will give up when their members move into
 the mainstream of community life. Women's
 organizations will survive only as long as they
 respond to the changing needs of their mem-
 bers. Communal organizations will grow
 stronger when they recognize that they must
 renew their spirits by searching out young men
 and women who are now part of the genera-
 tion to whom equality is a natural force.

So we must continue to press forward, to
 point out the inequities and to insist on com-
 munity accountability. The organized com-
 munity has not yet recognized it, but the wom-
 en's movement is irreversible.

ANNETTE DAUM

Annette Daum is Religious Action Consultant
 to the Commission on Social Action of Reform
 Judaism and staffs their Task Force on Women
 and Minorities.

A group of women traveling on a boat
 quarrel about their destination. To settle the
 dispute, one woman begins to bore a hole un-
 der the seat of the most vocal proponent for
 changing direction. . . .

This is the beginning of a modern *midrash*,
 which could be titled *Pirke Imahot*, Ethics of
 The Mothers, written by women, about wom-
 en, for women. The story is not yet complete.
 Women are completing it. . . .

What the world will be like for Jewish
 women in the year 2000 depends on whether or
 when we begin to recognize that we have all
 been placed in the same boat, shoved off from
 shore, equipped only with paddles, and pro-
 vided with direction by the power structure of
 Jewish society, which is still male-dominated.
 We are so busy quarreling among ourselves
 that we fail to note how effectively both our
 choices and our power have been limited—
 while men zip by us in motor-boats, full-speed
 ahead, oblivious to our plight.

The sinking—undermining—by women of

the only women who have the strength and determination to catch up ensures the continuation of the current system. The male hierarchy simply has to play a waiting game—waiting for women to destroy each other—to retain power. While a few token positions have opened up for women, Jewish organizations remain bastions of male supremacy.

Women professionally employed in Jewish institutions all too often undercut each other and are, in turn, undercut by women volunteer leadership.

The women who are the most assertive about seeking equality are the least likely to succeed in moving up the ladder. Their progress, if any, is short-lived. They are labeled "radical" and isolated without support from within the system.

Those women who have moved into leadership positions and could serve as role-models do not necessarily regard fostering equality for women as a primary objective. They willingly reap the harvest of the Jewish women's movement, but see no obligation to sow the seeds of future harvests to sustain other women.

The male power structure uses "Tante Tovah's" (the Jewish female Uncle Toms) to oppose those who are feminists.



This is true even in Reform Judaism, which prides itself as a movement which has taken the greatest strides toward gaining equality for women. Even here, Rabbi Sally Preisand, the first woman to be ordained as a rabbi in the United States, was denied interviews by nine pulpit committees—in one case, because the wives of committee members did not want a woman in a position of authority. No matter what issues the Jewish women's movement chooses to address—whether liturgy, ritual, *halachah*, religious education, research, family relations—the most vocal opposition to change comes from other women who are still dependent on the protective image of God the Father.

Most Jewish institutions have resolutions—words on paper—that call for justice for women; little has been done. Task Forces on Equality for Women, charged with obtaining equality for women in society as well as their respective organizations, are proliferating among Jewish agencies. Surveys are planned which are designed to research the role of women in professional and lay leadership roles. The work of these Task Forces is obviously limited because they are dependent for information, staffing, funding—for their very existence—on power structures which are controlled by men.

Women must demonstrate their own determination to participate as equals in every aspect of Jewish life. A comprehensive program is called for to seek out talented women and move them into professional and volunteer leadership positions; to establish goals and timetables; to provide ombudswomen who will be available to work with grassroots groups to prevent sexist problems from arising and resolve those that do. Sensitivity training on the issue of sexism should be provided for rabbinical and education students, as well as for key personnel in national Jewish agencies.

There is a need for a strong, independent, national Jewish feminist organization, operating outside institutional control, to:

1. provide a support system for feminists on every communal level and in all branches of Judaism. This is the most pressing priority for Jewish feminists. Jewish women have long been involved in consciousness-raising programs sponsored by the women's movement in secular society. Similar programs are needed, conducted under Jewish auspices, to help Jewish women grow in awareness of the impact of their Jewish heritage on their definition of "self"; to explore their roles as women from a Jewish perspective; to encourage them to expand opportunities for themselves and other women in Jewish life.

2. cooperate with the women's movement in secular society in support of such issues as ERA and reproductive freedom, the establishment of day care centers, etc. The Jewish Women's Agenda also includes the establishment of Jewish day care centers.

3. cooperate with feminists of other faith groups who face similar frustrations.

4. provide a "Jewish" home for Jewish feminists who will not join existing Jewish institutions that have not yet achieved non-sexist status.

If I were responsible for writing the end of the legend... the women would stop quarreling long enough to notice that they will all drown together if they do not regard themselves as their sisters' keepers.

They fix the craft, turn around and head back for shore—determined to make waves.

REBECCA TRACHTENBERG ALPERT

Rabbi Rebecca Trachtenberg Alpert has a Ph.D. in religion from Temple University and is a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College where she is currently the Director of Student Affairs. She is also associated with the Manhattan Reconstructionist Havurah.

If I had my way, there would be:

1. Jewish textbooks which reflect the variety of personal and professional options open to Jewish women of all ages today and which include the role of Jewish women in our history.

2. A rabbinate composed of approximately one-half women who are accorded the same communal respect and career opportunities as their male colleagues.

3. A liturgy which may refer to God metaphorically as He or She, which does not view male pronouns as generic terms and which recalls both the male and female heroes of our past.

4. A synagogue ritual in which women can be full participants: feeling comfortable wearing *kippa* (skullcap), *tallit* (prayer shawl) and *tefillin* (phylacteries); being counted in the *minyan* (quorum of worshippers), leading parts of the service, and being called to the Torah by their Hebrew names which incorporate the names of their mothers as well as their fathers.

5. A system defining personal status in which women can have egalitarian wedding and *ketubot* (marriage contracts), can initiate divorce and can serve as witnesses.

6. A community willing to study our heritage through a feminist filter, attempting through *midrash* (legend) and history to understand the roles of Jewish women of past generations.

7. A community open to celebrating the feminine through creating new rituals for women (like birth and puberty rites) and reinvigorating old ones (like celebrating *Rosh Hodesh*, New Moon, as a woman's holiday).

8. A community which accepts the personal choices made by women (and men) in terms of careers, bearing and raising children, sexual preferences and living arrangements.

9. A communal policy which publicly supports equal rights for women in the general society—here and in Israel.

10. A community that does not automatically ascribe a higher status to any task performed by a man.

11. A community which accords proper respect to the volunteer, knowing that every member of the community must volunteer (time, money and energy) to keep the group strong.

12. Growing numbers of Jewish women who respect themselves both as women and as Jews, seeking to celebrate being female and being Jewish; who learn from this self-respect to respect others: woman and man, Jew and non-Jew alike.

To dream is easy. To turn that dream into reality is not so simple a task. Some of these goals do seem attainable as a natural outgrowth of our work in the past. Others will come about only through concerted political and social action, while still others I don't expect to see in my lifetime: they may have to wait until the Messiah comes!



It is the middle group—things that could open if we worked together on them—that I'm most concerned with. I'm not sure that Jewish feminists are united in our concerns, but I think it's time we began to meet again and explore these questions. Another Jewish feminist conference may be the next necessary step to get us together and plan our agenda for the future. I'm not so much concerned about the form we ultimately take as I am that we begin to be more vocal and public, to take action and to make people aware that although much has happened for Jewish women, there is much that needs to be done. I hope we are ready to do it together.

IRENE FINE

Irene Fine is currently director of Jewish Studies at the Woman's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, a nonprofit organization in San Diego, California. At the Institute Fine teaches courses in Jewish women's history, female theology and creating Midrash and analogies for contemporary women. She is also completing her doctorate from Union Graduate School where her thesis is entitled: "Developing a Continuing Education Program for Jewish Women—A Springboard to History." One important task remains yet to be completed by the year 2000, after all the work already accomplished by the Jewish woman's movement. This is the complete integration of women's and men's history into our Jewish textbooks and anthologies.

Much has been done along the lines of searching and writing women's history, but we are still out of the mainstream in most texts used in history and literature courses. You are only to go to your nearest synagogue, university or local library to check this out. Pick out books at random which have not been written especially for women. You will find we are not represented in 90% of the books dealing with history and literature.

If this condition continues, when our daughters pick up the textbooks 20 years from now they will not find their history. This unconsciously delivers the message they are not valued or meaningful as people—the message we all have been trying to counteract. Not completing the task of integration is to suggest that all our work has been in vain.

I am not discouraged. I think both educators and learners alike can speed up the process of integration. They should:

1. refuse to use texts in your classrooms—high schools, high schools, seminaries and universities—which do not include women's history equally with men's. We have enough research now on women from every period in Jewish history so there is ample material available for use. If texts do not meet the standard of integration, send them back to the publisher and let them know *why* the texts can't be used. Also, educators could suggest new writings and research to the publishers which would be more appropriate for their classrooms. (I am told that middle-class Jewish women are the biggest book-buying market in the country. If we refuse to buy, the power of the purse carries clout.)



2. persuade researchers and writers who are writing on female-oriented issues to write more in their area of expertise. The '70's brought us a wealth of material from gifted writers, but we still need more, much more to use in classrooms and discussion groups. Writers who are currently working in areas related to female issues and who have not yet published should be encouraged to do so.

3. continue to teach the "skills of access" as a main priority in the classroom. This means courses on how to create midrash (legends), write Torah commentaries, construct Shabbat services, research history. When this is accomplished, I hope women will assume authority for their own abilities and stop asking permission to do all of the above or expect it be done for them. Also, update festivals and rituals in order to make them more meaningful to women.

4. lead learners onto paths not yet explored. Women are really not bound by the traditional forms which do not take into consideration their experience or their awareness. We should all encourage women to explore new ways of expressing themselves and allow for new forms to arise whenever possible.

5. take responsibility for writing your own Jewish history—in the form of diaries, stories, poems and commentaries on Jewish law. Taken collectively, all of these short pieces will add up to your own history, written in your own words and by your own hand. This may indeed be the most valuable legacy we can all leave to our daughters.

6. ask that courses in female history and sociology be given in every university and seminary that graduates male rabbis, social welfare workers and communal service workers. *Hopefully, the joke of the year 2000 will not be what it is in the year 1980—that male graduates are hired to work in communities where they know very little about 50% of their constituents.*

7. take Jewish history classes along with "rap" and "consciousness-raising" classes. I suggest this because as an educator I see women in class who are not yet aware of women's presence in history and the contributions they have made in each major period in history.

8. refrain from attending lectures or continuing education programs where women teachers and lecturers are not represented, and then tell the directors of these programs why you are not attending. Some of our best-known camps and schools still promote the ideal of the male as lecturer and teacher. When asked why they do so, the answer these directors usually give is that they don't know of any women teachers qualified to speak. If such is the case then I would urge the learner to buy

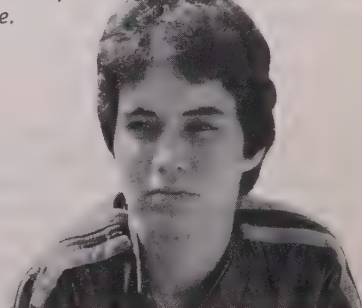
them a subscription to LILITH, where they can find about many women, specialists in their field, who are ready, willing and able to share their expertise.

9. discourage our brightest and most gifted male lecturers from hopping around the country speaking for women and about women's issues. Women have the ability to speak for themselves and for other women. If a man still accepts the task of speaking for Jewish women, ask him specifically what his studies have been in female history, sociology, psychology, and religion that give him the credentials to do so.

10. be aware that the female adult learner will be returning to the classroom in ever-increasing numbers; a woman today realizes that what she learned at 13 in Jewish history does not give her sustenance at 30. She is going to want to learn more. Not only is she going to want to continue her Jewish studies to give her insight on how to be a better Jew, but she will also be looking for clues as to how she can make a more worthwhile contribution to her community as an adult. Expect her. Welcome her. Acknowledge her. She is one of our most valuable natural Jewish resources. ©1980 Irene Fine

JANE LITMAN

Jane Litman is a feminist writer and Judaic scholar. She teaches Jewish women's studies at San Francisco Bay area women's centers and synagogues. Her particular interest is female-identified spirituality and ritual. She is a founding member of the Bay Area Jewish Women's Collective.



Four years ago on Simchat Torah I was in Mea Shearim (the ultra-Orthodox Jerusalem neighborhood). I was a rabbinical student with a group of mostly career Jews—two female rabbinical students, one male rabbinical student, one Jewish education student of each gender, and one dear friend—male. I had to scrounge for "acceptable" clothing (I'm a jeans-and-T-shirt woman) and one of my friends remarked that I looked more appropriately dressed for Purim than Simchat Torah. I was uncomfortable, but willing to see what would happen.

We heard music and laughter and caught sight of a brightly lit building with figures dancing on the top floor. Of course there were two separate staircases—one for men and one for women. We dove into the crowd. The men vanished up their staircase. We women began to push and shove our way up ours. It became more and more crowded as we ascended until we finally made it to the top.

On this tiny balcony there was no door—just a row of windows with women, stacked three and four back, pressing their faces to the

glass. Many of the girls had climbed out over the balcony and were hanging on to the moulding. The drop to the stones below was 20 or 30 feet.

That was a moment of Divine insight for me—a picture provided by God. This I devoutly believe. I stared at the men dancing inside, then at the women pushing and elbowing each other to catch a glimpse of the men's joy, then at the little girls risking their lives to watch—to watch! I can call that picture to mind any time I wish, and it makes me burn with anger and sick with rage.

This Rosh Hashana I celebrated with a group of eight women—five loving thoughtful Jewish women and three loving thoughtful non-Jewish women. We read and sang outdoors, under an arbor of oak trees and danced until midnight the dances our mothers have danced with each other for three millenia. We blew the shofar and listened to its haunting melody fade into the soft darkness. We sang: *henai mah tov u' mah nayim shevot achiot gam yachad*—How good it is when sisters sit together.

We drank wine and made blessings—blessed our mothers, ourselves, women who love other women, women working out ways to deal with men, men struggling to overcome their own sexism. We also blessed the wind, the sky, and Mother Earth. We wove a web of yarn in and out of our fingers, back and forth across the circle, each time reaffirming our pride as women and our connection to the Eternal One, blessed be She. We read poetry—Hannah Senesh to Robin Morgan. We talked about the New Year, the new moon, and our pleasure in having old traditions to reform and rekindle. We finally broke up slowly, not wanting to leave the warmth we had made.

I suppose I felt for my service a similar feeling to that which male Hasidim feel after they dance and pray all night—a feeling of tremendous joy and oneness with the Creator.

It had been a steady road from that night in Mea Shearim to this year's Rosh Hashana. I left rabbinical school, walked out of many shuls, broke with my local Hillel and left my city's gay congregation, all because of sexism.

I cannot pray in a place that is just a more subtle version of the scene in Mea Shearim.

So I have organized Jewish women's groups, taught classes, and given lectures. I belong to a Jewish women's collective. I attend a monthly lesbian/feminist Shabbat group that grew out of the women dissatisfied with the gay synagogue. The women with whom I worship are in many ways my vision of all Jewish women in the year 2000.

This Rosh Hashana was the first time I have felt whole as a woman and as a Jew since the Simchat Torah in Mea Shearim robbed me of my people. For in addition to being devoted Jewish feminists we must become educated, practicing Jewish feminists. That is my vision of the year 2000. We must learn our histories as women and as Jews and blend them together. Our knowledge is our strength. I did not write this New Year's service—four women did it cooperatively. We reclaimed our right to define ourselves and used our abilities and, believe me, it felt wonderful!

It hurts me every time I am in a group of

Jewish feminists who tell me they don't know how to be Jewish. I am sad every time I see any of us settle for prayerbook Judaism because we don't have the courage to demand and create changes to make it more meaningful to us as women. We have been taught ignorance and timidity. It will take a good deal of struggle to overcome these feelings, but it can and must be done.

I don't want to give the impression that my ideal Jewish feminist future is women-only. I know there are some sympathetic men out there who are as eager as I to confront and overthrow "God the father." However I am positive that there should be no compromise with the patriarchal structures. They are draining and oppressive.

In my ideal future there are no rabbis or Federations. We as Jews will be an ethnic, cultural, and spiritual group within a non-threatening feminist society. This means that we, as Jewish women, must support the women's movement as a whole, particularly concerning reproductive freedom, lesbian rights, and the E.R.A. (This means, for example, that B'nai Brith Women have got to stop sponsoring fund-raisers to Nevada, an unratified state.) We should set up summer or weekend camps for our daughters and sons with both feminist and Jewish content. We must break the stranglehold Orthodoxy has on Jewish growth, especially in Israel.

ESTHER BRONER

E.M. Broner is author of Her Mothers; A Weave of Women (both with Holt, Rinehart & Winston), co-editor (with Cathy N. Davidson) of a collection: The Lost Tradition: Mothers and Daughters in Literature (Frederick Ungar Publishing Co.) and "The Lost Legacy: A Woman's Passover Haggadah" (with Naomi Nimrod).

What does the Jewish woman want?

She doesn't want Sigmund Freud. She wants a supportive group of feminist therapists, especially sensitive to the Jewish woman's role in patriarchy.

She wants a woman rabbi, especially gifted as an archaeologist in digging out the role of women in the Torah, in providing ecstasy and context.

She may want a Woman's Synagogue. The role of women in every other synagogue suffers, even in the gay synagogues.

She will want a Torah, written by women, that she can kiss, that shames her in no way, neither does it exclude her. And the garments for the Torah are provided by her, and the crowns specially crafted by women silver-

smiths, and the *bima* (platform from which the Torah is read) built by women carpenters, the drapery embroidered by women performing their ancient arts, the kiddush cups blown by women glassblowers.

Women will tithe themselves to support the Synagogue.

It will be an undefiled synagogue. It will be up to the woman rabbi, woman cantor, women congregants whether to provide a balcony or curtained area for the men. If so, such space must be built according to the strict rules of *mechitza* (partition between the sexes).

If this Women's Synagogue works as the ancient Temple of Solomon did, there will be a courtyard. Women will ply their trades: weavers, ceramicists. Women will argue law and religion. There will be *shiyurim* (classes) for women. We will have women's restaurants in the Synagogue square and women's movie theaters. There will be coffee shops—Old Girls Clubs—to tell women of opportunities.

Women will be informed when a birthing is to take place, so they can welcome a daughter into the tribe of women on her eighth day.

Our children shall bear our names, our surnames or our adopted names or our pen names or our totemic names.

Women will teach their sons gentleness and supportiveness. A new generation of men will be born, but they must wander in the desert for forty years so that they can rid themselves of defilement before they can join us.

There will have to be a Women's College devoted solely to the study of women: historically, in literature, biologically, in the arts (theatre, music, the visual arts, the culinary arts), geographically, religiously, linguistically.

Women in this college will be taught survival skills: how to live within a family, how to live within employment situations, how to live within a hostile city, how to live while being bombarded by TV, billboards, shop window advertising. The sports department of the Women's College will provide required courses for every student—and students can be of any age. Women will learn nutrition and health. All cooking will be according to the laws of *kashruth*—for no meat will bleed upon our hands. We will learn martial arts, learn to be Jewish warriors. We will build underground shelters and carefully store our learning vessels in case of attack.

We will have active women's presses and review boards and we will nominate our own alternatives to National Book Award, Pulitzer Prizes and Nobel Prizes.

We will hold international conferences.

We will learn how to unite with other women of other religious faiths and to share our learning. As a Jewish woman, literate and politically active, I find that the rhetoric of the Jewish men has caused us to drift and to separate from women of other races. We Jewish women must not be deprived of our Black sisters, must not have our views towards Arab women stated for us. We are the bridge and connection for we share the same biological geography.

Within the embrace of experience and of faith, Jewish women will become a renewed Amazon race.



DECLAIMING JEWISH HERSTORY

AXINE S. SELLER

Sixty-one courses in American Jewish Studies are currently offered in colleges and universities throughout the country, at least one-third of them introductory history surveys, according to a 1978 study. I teach one of these surveys, "The American Jewish Experience," at the State University of New York at Buffalo. This piece will summarize my experiences in including women into that course.

My efforts in this direction owe much to the theoretical work on women's history done by historians such as Gerda Lerner, Juliet Mitchell, Sheila Ryan Johansson, and Joan W. Scott. I began with what Lerner calls "compensatory" history—adding the missing women to the traditional male-centered history. This was not difficult to do because, as I found at the index of any American Jewish history text will demonstrate, almost everyone has left out except Rebecca Gratz and, occasionally, Emma Lazarus or Henrietta Szold.

While a wide range of American Jewish women are included in such texts, only a few token women are there and these few were apparently selected only if they followed the most conventional lifestyle and devoted themselves to the service of famous Jewish spouses or of a long number of approved Jewish causes.

When this double standard is eliminated, a new cast of characters appears, including Ernestine Rose, Emma Goldman, Anzia Yezierska, Rose Schneiderman and Bella Abzug, and others whose lifestyles were widely varied and who were active in the wider political and cultural life of the nation. To the usual questions about important American Jewish figures—what was their relationship to their Jewishness and to America—I added another: what was the importance of their identity as women?

The second step was insisting that students consider women's activities, interests, and perceptions as an integral part of every topic, and of importance to the activities, interests, and perceptions of men. Gender became a mandatory category of analysis, whether the topic was education, work, immigration, institutional life, or anything else.

Several things began to happen as a result. First, analysis became more complex because the category of women is a complex one, interrelated by other categories. Students must be confronted with the diversity of American Jewish women as part of their knowledge of the diversity of the Jewish community.

A second thing that happened when gender became a category of analysis is that old topics were opened up in new ways and conventional wisdom became questionable. For example, the

Jewish tradition of religious scholarship is usually evoked to explain Jewish success in American public schools. Some questions:

- Since this tradition was for men only, how do we explain the educational success of Jewish women?

- Did the rapid educational mobility documented for men by Marshall Sklare and others take place at the same time for women, or did it take place a generation or two later?

Much has been written from a male-centered perspective about Americanization and about social mobility. Some questions:

- Americanization for men was often seen as the loss of spiritual ideals in the interest of economic advancement, but what did Americanization mean for women? Charlotte Baum, Paula Hyman, and Sonya Michel suggest in *The Jewish Woman in America* (1976) that it often meant giving up the role of breadwinner with its accompanying power for one of American-style feminine dependence and powerlessness.

- Social mobility for men was the move from semi-skilled labor to the professions or to business ownership. For women was it the rise from sweatshop sewing to secretarial work, bookkeeping, and teaching? Or was it the sudden move from labor to leisure, based not on education or individual achievement, but on skill in becoming an American "lady" and attracting an upwardly mobile husband?

Finally, the political activity of the American Jewish community takes on a new dimension when women are included. The much-touted tradition of American Jewish liberalism was undoubtedly shaped by the contributions of East European immigrant women nurtured on the radical doctrines of socialism and Zionism, both of which had strong feminist content. Was there a straight line of development between immigrant women trying to overthrow the Czar in Russia and unionize the sweatshop in America and their daughters and granddaughters in the peace movement, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Women's Movement of our own time?

The introduction of women as equal participants in American Jewish history does more than redefine the traditional topics; it also opens up vast new content areas. The role of Jewish women in women's causes such as suffrage and birth control becomes important, as does their role in both Jewish and non-Jewish community organizations. Women's social networks, their cultural interests, and their special occupations (social work, teaching, bookkeeping) become classroom topics, as do changes in family structure, in numbers and spacing of children, and in female life-cycle patterns.

Ultimately, putting women into American Jewish history—not as a footnote or supplement but as an integral part of that history—changes the way we see the entire subject—not only its content, but also its conceptualization.

The traditional organizing framework based upon three consecutive waves of immigration—Sephardic, Central European and East European—has long been attacked as inadequate and misleading, but historians have failed so far to agree upon a replacement. *Any new conceptual framework must make sense in terms of the lives of women as well as men.* At present I organize my course around economic and social change in the United States, more specifically, industrialization and urbanization. This is still less than satisfactory, since changing industrial technology may have been a more important determinant in the lives of men than of women.

I would like to be able to report that I have moved from "compensatory" history through the transitional stages of redefining old topics and adding new ones to a final stage of reconceptualizing my course, but this is not the case. I am still doing all four of these things simultaneously. I am also doing a fifth thing—looking for course materials.

Finding materials to teach the new non-sexist American Jewish history survey is as difficult as defining the content. Standard texts such as Nathan Glazer's *American Judaism* (1957) and Henry Feingold's *Zion in America* (1974) are male-centered in language, content, and conception. Even recent works focusing on social and cultural history give women inadequate space or treat them with condescension.

Irving Howe's *World of Our Fathers* (1976), for example, underemphasizes women's roles in the Jewish labor movement, devotes several pages to the stereotype of the shrewish Jewish mother, and suggests that "the successful entry of the immigrant Jews into the American business world required a reassertion of 'the male principle.'" Awaiting the publication of a better alternative, I assign parallel chapters from two texts, a traditional male-centered one and *The Jewish Woman in America*. Since the book by Baum, Hyman and Michel has no material on colonial women, I supplement it with a few of the biographical selections in Anita Lebeson's *Recall to Life: The Jewish Woman in America* (1970).

Unfortunately, the inadequate textbooks cannot be supplemented with the usual documentary collections or with collection of articles from scholarly journals because these materials consistently ignore women or, worse yet, insult them. Two leading historians, Joseph Blau and Salo Baron, wrote a documentary history, *Jews of the United States 1790-1840* (1963), containing 352 documents, fewer than 20 of which deal with women. Eleven of the 20 are letters, eight of which are written by Rebecca Gratz. The collection contains two documents on women's philanthropy which, the editors point out, was a way for well-to-do women to pass their time.

Cont'd. on page 26

OVERLEAF: Comic Strip by Trina Robbins.

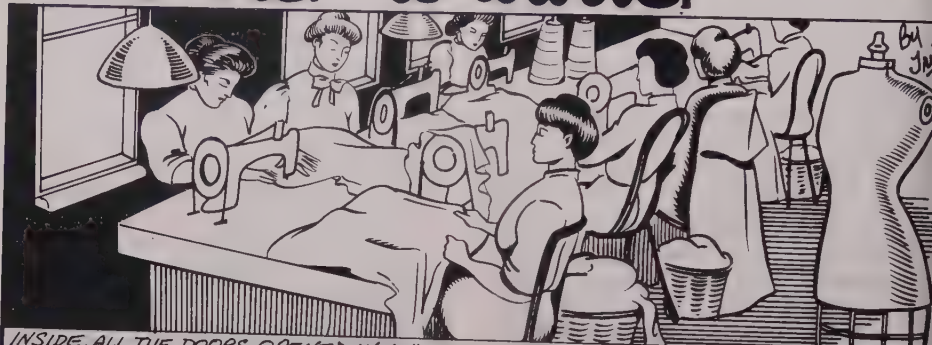
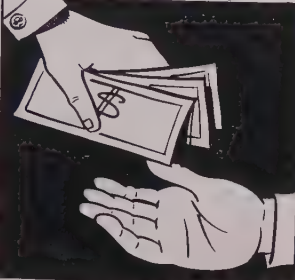
Axine S. Seller, Associate Professor in the Department of Social Foundations at SUNY Buffalo, authored *To Seek America: A History of Ethnic Immigrants in the United States* (1977) and the forthcoming *Immigrant Woman*.



the TRIANGLE FIRE

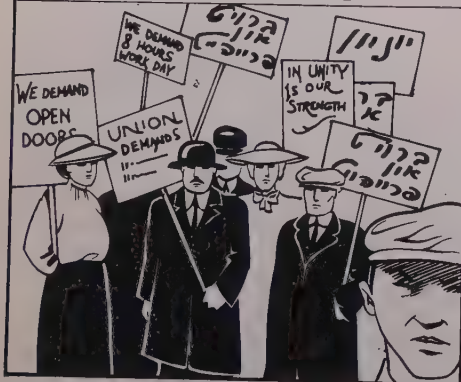
THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST CO. OCCUPIED THE 8TH, 9TH AND 10TH FLOORS OF THE ASCH BLDG., ON GREENE ST. AND WASHINGTON PL., WHERE NEW YORK UNIVERSITY NOW STANDS. IN 1909 THE BUILDING HAD BEEN INSPECTED AND FIRE HAZARDS NOTED, AMONG THEM NOT ENOUGH STAIRCASES, AND A FIRE ESCAPE THAT ENDED AT THE SECOND FLOOR.

NO CHANGES WERE MADE. A YEAR LATER, THE FIRE DEPARTMENT INSPECTED THE BUILDING AND FOUND IT IN GOOD CONDITION. IT WAS DECLARED FIREPROOF.



INSIDE, ALL THE DOORS OPENED IN, AND THEY WERE LOCKED DURING THE WORKDAY TO KEEP THE EMPLOYEES FROM LEAVING EARLY, AND TO PREVENT THEFT.

THE TRIANGLE OWNERS, MAX BLANK AND ISAAC HARRIS, HAD A HISTORY OF LABOR TROUBLE. IN 1909, 200 WORKERS WENT ON STRIKE, PROTESTING WORKING CONDITIONS.



BLANK AND HARRIS BROUGHT IN THE POLICE. GIRLS ON THE PICKET LINES WERE BEATEN, AND CARTED OFF TO JAIL. THE ILGWU* CALLED A GENERAL STRIKE IN SYMPATHY.



2 MONTHS LATER WHEN THE STRIKE ENDED, THE UNION HAD WON SOME GAINS, BUT NOT THE GIRLS AT TRIANGLE. BLANK AND HARRIS WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE THE UNION. THE DOOR STILL OPENED IN AND THE FIRE ESCAPE STILL ENDED AT THE SECOND FLOOR.



4:45 PM, SATURDAY MARCH 25, 1911, ON THE 8TH FLOOR OF THE ASCH BUILDING, A WORKER NOTICED SMOKE COMING FROM A RAG BIN.



THE FIRE QUICKLY SPREADING, SUPERINTENDANT SAMUEL BERNSTEIN GRABBED THE FIRE HOSE.



VAY ISS MIR! THE HOSE IS ROTTEN - IT'S FALLING TO PEICES!

THE DOOR WAS LOCKED. AFTER MUCH SCREAMING, SOMEONE GOT IT OPEN - INWARDLY - AND IN PANIC AND CONFUSION THE WORKERS STUMBLED DOWNSTAIRS TO SAFETY.



FOR MY FATHER, WHO TOLD ME THIS STORY WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

* INTERNATIONAL LADIES GARMENT WORKERS UNION

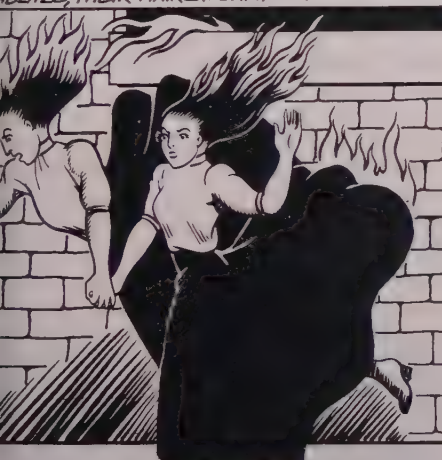
TO OCCUPANTS OF THE TRIANGLE 10TH FLOOR OFFICES, INCLUDING BLANCK AND HARRIS, AND BLANCK'S TWO DAUGHTERS, AGED 11 AND 12, ESCAPED TO THE ROOF.



THIS TIME IT WAS ALMOST TOO LATE.



AND IN HAND THEY JUMPED THEIR CLOTHING ABLAZE, THEIR HAIR STREAMING UP IN FLAMES.



RELATIVES OF THE VICTIMS GATHERED AT THE BURIAL BUILDING. BY 7 P.M. THERE WERE 1,000 PEOPLE WATCHING IN HORRIFIED SILENCE AS BODY AFTER BODY WAS TAKEN AWAY.



TRINA ROBBINS '78

LAW STUDENTS FROM ADJOINING N.Y.U. PUSHED LADDERS ACROSS THE ROOFTOPS AND GUIDED THE VICTIMS TO SAFETY AS THE SMOKE AND FLAMES LEAPT ABOUT THEM.



OTHERS TRIED THE FIRE ESCAPE. LOADED WITH PEOPLE, IT PULLED FROM THE WALL AND COLLAPSED, SPILLING BODIES INTO THE COURTYARD BELOW.



THEIR COMBINED WEIGHT TORE THROUGH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT NETS. WITHIN MINUTES THE STREET WAS COVERED WITH BODIES.



THE SEARCH AMONG THE BODIES FOR MISSING RELATIVES BEGAN. ALL IN ALL, 146 WORKERS HAD DIED, MOST OF THEM YOUNG JEWISH IMMIGRANT WOMEN. 17 BODIES NEVER IDENTIFIED WERE BURIED BY THE CITY.



THE OCCUPANTS OF THE 9TH FLOOR WERE NOT AS LUCKY. THEY DIDN'T KNOW A FIRE HAD STARTED TILL THEY SAW THE FLAMES LEAPING IN THE WINDOWS.



FOR THE REST OF THE PEOPLE ON THE 9TH FLOOR, THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO ESCAPE THE FLAMES.



HOOK AND LADDER COMPANY TWENTY ARRIVED WITH THE TALLEST LADDER IN THE FIRE DEPT. IT ONLY REACHED TO THE 6TH FLOOR.



EXCERPT FROM A SPEECH BY ROSE SCHNEIDERMAN AT A MASS MEETING HELD ON MAY 2, 1911, TO PROTEST THE FACTORY CONDITIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRAGEDY:

IT WOULD BE A TRAITOR TO THESE POOR BURNED BODIES, IF I CAME HERE TO TALK GOOD FELLOWSHIP... THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME GIRLS HAVE BEEN BURNED ALIVE IN THE CITY. EVERY WEEK I MUST LEARN OF THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF ONE OF MY SISTER WORKERS. EVERY YEAR THOUSANDS OF US ARE MAIMED... TOO MUCH BLOOD HAS BEEN SPILLED. I KNOW FROM MY EXPERIENCE THAT IT IS UP TO THE WORKING PEOPLE TO SAVE THEMSELVES. THE ONLY WAY THEY CAN SAVE THEMSELVES IS BY A STRONG WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT.



Men's charities are, of course, accorded more respect. The only other documents dealing with women are poems, two by Penina Moise, whom the editors introduce as a curiosity, noting that "it is clear from her verses that she had no poetic talent."

Collections of scholarly articles are no better. Jacob Rader Marcus's *Memories of American Jews*, a three-volume collection of articles from the *American Jewish Archives* (1955-56), contains not a single one focusing on women. Abraham Karp's *The Jewish Experience in America*, a five-volume collection of articles from the *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* (1969) contains only one—on Rebecca Gratz. (Under its new name, *American Jewish History*, this journal appears to have changed its policy; the September and December 1978 issues contained articles about women.)

The material in social science volumes was equally disappointing. Some of this material reinforces negative stereotypes about the "self-indulgence" and even the "frigidity" of Jewish women. In a 1976 study, *Community and Politics: Organizational Dynamics of American Jewry*, a prominent political scientist refers to "the onslaughts of the Women's Lib movement." Daniel J. Eleazar argues that Jewish women control American Jewish cultural life because they purchase most of the books and theater tickets, and suggests that women are Hebrew school teachers rather than administrators because teaching is a "part time position, ideal for housewives who want to earn some money on Sundays or in the late afternoons."

Fortunately, I have found biographies and autobiographies extremely useful (although biographies must be selected with care, since some contain an anti-feminist perspective.) These cover a wide range of women—from the excellent out-of-print work by Yuri Suhl, *Ernestine L. Rose and the Battle for Human Rights* (1959), about a 19th century colleague of Susan B. Anthony to *The Maimie Papers*, letters of a Jewish prostitute in early 20th century Philadelphia (1977; reviewed in LILITH #4).

Poetry, fiction, and drama about American Jewish women and, whenever possible, by American Jewish women can also be a rich source of material. Most libraries have anthologies of such works (some of it translated from the Yiddish). I do not teach poetry, fiction or drama as works of literature; rather, I treat them as historical documents. I assign I.L. Peretz's poem "The Three Seamstresses" as a source on reasons behind East European immigration. I use Anzia Yezierska's short story, "The Fat of the Land," and her novel *Bread Givers* (1925; 1975) as sources on Americanization and inter-generational conflict. I have used Abraham Reisin's short stories "The Dime Bank" and "The Contribution" as part of an assignment on the Jewish labor movement. Workshop classroom readings of one-act Yiddish plays (in English translation) have provided the basis for discussions of changing values and women's changing roles.

A third set of useful materials is the work of journalists, social workers, and government commissions, much of which dates from the early twentieth century and thus covers the

East European immigration. Some are well known and easily accessible—Hutchins Hapgood's journalistic portrait of "new" and "old" types of women in New York's Lower East Side, *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (ca. 1900; 1965), for example. Other such materials are more obscure and contain fragments of information about Jewish women scattered among materials on other immigrant groups. Carol Manning's study, *The Immigrant Woman and Her Job* (written for the Women's Bureau in 1930) contains data about the citizenship, educational background, and family status as well as the work experience of young Jewish women in Philadelphia. Sophonisba Breckinridge, a University of Chicago sociologist and social worker, published several volumes of case studies that contain information about the daily lives of Jewish women, including details about their family's health, whether or not they were breast-fed, their relationship to their husband, and what kind of toilet facilities their homes had. It also gives data about the poor laws and school laws that affected Jewish immigrant women, and about the social services available to them.

Recent anthropological work, some of it done by people sensitive to women's issues, also provides information about American Jewish women. Songs about children's games, courtship, marriage, and immigration are available in Ruth Rubin's *Voices of a People, the Story of Yiddish Folksong* (1973). Oral histories that I have found useful include Sydelle Kramer and Jenny Masor's collection *Jewish Grandmothers* (1976), Corinne Krause's study of Italian, Jewish, and Slavic immigrant women in Pittsburgh (published by the American Jewish Committee), and Dorothy Rabinowitz's accounts of Holocaust survivors in the United States, *New Lives* (1976). *Number Our Days*, Barbara Myerhoff's moving study of the Jewish aged in southern California (1978), contains a wealth of information on the lives of Jewish women and upon the strength and dignity with which they meet old age [reviewed in this issue —Ed.].

Finding materials for a non-sexist course in American Jewish History can be exciting because this is still a relatively unmined field. Sources can be located in Aviva Cantor's *Bibliography on the Jewish Woman*, (Biblio Press, 1979), in the bibliography in Baum, Hyman and Michel's *The Jewish Woman in America*, and in Babett F. Inglehart and Anthony Mangione's bibliography, *The Image of Pluralism in American Literature* (American Jewish Committee, 1974).

Whatever materials are selected, they should be presented as integral parts of the regular class assignments, not as supplementary or optional readings. Moreover, they should be presented without apology; women have a right to equal time. Accustomed to the usual, male-centered course, some students may express surprise or, in the case of the men, disapproval of a course that is non-sexist in content and materials. Most of my drop-outs have been men.

My course includes a research paper from each student. Although I encourage research about women I do not, of course, require it. I

do require students to use non-sexist language in their research papers, however, and to use gender as a category of analysis whenever appropriate.

In addition to the materials mentioned above, students can use the records of local Jewish women's organizations and of social and governmental agencies as research sources. Beginning history students will need guidance in dealing with governmental reports and other quantitative materials. Governmental agencies use different categories of reporting at different times. Students should be alerted to Jews are sometimes listed separately as "Russians" in government reports and sometimes included in other categories such as "Russian or "Polish."

Official documents may contain a variety of distortions in dealing with women. For example, Jewish women who earned money by taking in boarders, sewing at home, or keeping a shop either alone or with their husbands might not be numbered among the "employed." Male-centered reporting may distort the realities of women's lives. The Dillingham Report on immigration measures the degree of congestion in living quarters by counting two children under eight as one adult. Yet the Jewish housewife who shared her small apartment with her husband and two adult boarders, all of whom were at work 14 hours a day, did not experience the same degree of crowding as the housewife with no boarders but with four children under the age of eight!

Students must also be cautioned about another pitfall of women's history—the confusion of proscriptive with descriptive literature. What male authorities said Jewish women were or should be did not necessarily coincide with the realities of what those women were or what they actually did.

Oral history is a popular form of research but again one that requires careful preparation. Grandparents and great-aunts may appear to be ideal interview subjects, but relatives are often reticent in discussing personal feelings in sensitive areas—sex, for example. Students have better results from interviewing strangers such as residents in a home for the aged.

My attempt to put women into the American Jewish History survey course has presented problems of content, format, conceptualization, materials, and student reaction—problems which I am a long way from solving. As a historian, my commitment to the new social history made this effort imperative; a history course that omits half the population supposedly being studied is clearly inaccurate and inadequate. As a Jew, my concern is that American Jewish women are being kept ignorant of the wide range of political, economic, social and cultural activities of their predecessors and are therefore deprived of a rich source of role models.

Finally, as a feminist, I am committed to improving the status of women in Jewish life as in every other aspect of life. Unless Jewish students have a realistic knowledge of the ideological and structural factors that have determined the status of American Jewish women in the past, they will be unable to respond affirmatively and effectively to need for change in the present and the future.

THE MOURNING MINYAN

BY GRETA WEINER

When our mother died in July 1976, my sister and I became mourners for the first time. There was no discussion between us over whether we would recite Kaddish, for we never questioned our obligation to do so. Our mother did not teach us that daughters had different obligations to their parents than sons, and she provided us with a role model by going to the synagogue daily to recite Kaddish for her father when we were very small.

We were totally unprepared for the religious experiences awaiting us in the next eleven months.

While our strong attachment to traditional Judaism had led us to believe that the experience would provide comfort, we could never have imagined the spiritual strength we would derive from reciting Kaddish with members of the Jewish community. On many occasions, total strangers welcomed us into their midst with warm hospitality, and made great efforts to console us.

But we would never have believed either the torment we would feel as a result of the hostility we faced when, on other occasions, we would be treated as "intruders" by male Jews who did not wish to pray with women.

The Kaddish is a prayer sanctified by its association with death, although there is nothing about death in it. It is an affirmation of life and faith. The Kaddish contains phrases about life when the thoughts of mourners are filled with death; it emphasizes peace when the emotions of the bereaved are in a state of upheaval; and it stresses commitment to God when faith is uncertain.

The Kaddish reinforces the spiritual bond between generations. Jewish Law requires children to recite it at services three times daily for 11 months after the death of a parent. In accepting this obligation, children honor their parents by publicly accepting their moral teachings, and by exhibiting to the community their continued love and respect for them.

Although its recitation is a personal tribute to a particular parent, because of its holiness as a prayer the Kaddish must be recited in public—defined as at least a

quorum of ten adults (*minyan*). This prohibition against saying Kaddish in private prevents mourners from withdrawing from the community during these intense emotional times, and encourages them to seek comfort among other Jews. They experience together a feeling of community—a sense of uniting in prayer and sharing in sorrow.

Thus, reciting Kaddish not only unites parents and children, it brings together the community of Jews.

While *all* children must observe the other obligations of mourning, in traditional Judaism the obligation to recite the Kaddish falls upon the son only, never the daughter. Female children are exempt from this obligation because of "family responsibilities," regardless of individual circumstances or desires.

Traditional Judaism does not recognize the definition of *minyan* as a quorum of ten adults, *qua* adults. A *minyan* must consist of ten adults who are bound by the obligation to recite certain time-bound prayers, including the Kaddish. Since women are exempt from this obligation by Jewish law, and their voluntary assumption of it is not recognized as fulfilling any obligation, they do not fit into the definition of adults who can be counted in the quorum. Only males have this obligation; thus, only males count.

Thus, according to Jewish law, daughters need not publicly express respect and affection for a deceased parent. And too, Judaism need not provide them with a buttress against loneliness and withdrawal during mourning by insisting that they join with other Jews for daily services.

Our first encounter with the problems we would face as Jewish women attempting to fulfill voluntarily the obligation of saying Kaddish came on the very day that our mother was buried. My sister's rabbi of 16 years came to her home that evening to express his condolences and to conduct services. When it was time to begin, he refused to do so. Numbed by all of the painful experiences of the day, we did not understand his action until he pointed out that only eight men were present. My sister immediately began to call neighbors and friends, but no one was at home. In desperation, she begged him to conduct services with the people present, but he refused again and left the house.

We decided to hold services that evening—even without the rabbi. Our family joined together in prayer, and when it came time



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for us to recite our first Kaddish outside of the cemetery, our father, in a strong voice, led us carefully through it. Thus, on the very evening of our mother's burial, our family broke with tradition in order to unite in tears and reaffirm our commitment to God.

The next morning, we began the routine which we were to continue for the next 11 months, getting up at daybreak to attend services. The small group of men in the chapel welcomed us and helped us prepare for the morning service. When it came time for the Kaddish, we stood alongside others whose faces were lined with sorrow. We all recited the Kaddish together, and my sister and I experienced, for the first time, that feeling of community—that sense of sharing. It did not seem to matter whether we were male or female: we were all Jews praying to our God.

My sister and I travelled extensively throughout the country during the year for professional reasons, and we became acquainted with several Jewish communities. Our experiences of meeting, praying and being a part of these different groups for even a short period of time was very rewarding, and, for the most part, the hours spent in synagogue were filled with comfort, understanding and mutual support. Our identity as Jews was our passport to these communities. But on too many occasions, our identity as women excluded us. This exclusion depended on two factors: 1) how closely its members adhered to the Orthodox treatment of women, and 2) whether there was a *minyan* without us.

Although I would have preferred not to attend services at Orthodox synagogues, this could not be avoided. They were often the only ones offering daily services, in some communities.

I'll never forget my first experience at a daily service in an Orthodox synagogue. I knew that I would be separated from the men, but I was not prepared for the accommodations which were reserved for me as a woman. When I walked into the chapel, I was led to two rows of pews in the back of the room behind a six-foot closely-woven screen. I was able to see nothing in the room—not the ark, not the rabbi, nothing at all.

At first I just felt isolated, but as I sat there longer, I began to have the feeling of being imprisoned. It was very difficult for me to believe that my religion expected me to pray from within a cage, and I knew that my mother would never have sanctioned

the self-imprisonment of her daughter for any reason. As these feelings intensified, I left this section and stood in the back of the chapel by the door. I stayed there for the remainder of the service.

On another occasion, my husband and I went to a small synagogue where men were praying around long tables on the second floor of the building. A man came over to welcome my husband and to lead me downstairs to the bottom of the stairs. He put a chair there for me, and motioned for me to stay. I chose to ignore him, and went back upstairs in time to worship with the others.

Such experiences were not limited to Orthodox synagogues, however. I found that some of the men who attend daily services in Conservative synagogues also regard women as intruders. I remember clearly one particular incident at a Conservative synagogue. My husband and sons entered the chapel first. As my teen-age daughter and I were going in, a man pushed us back rather forcefully. With a smile on his face, he stated that he was sure that we understood how our presence would be "disruptive" to the men trying the pray.

Absolutely furious over both the physical and verbal insult, I told this man that I certainly did not understand, and that I had come to pray and say Kaddish for my mother. I then took my daughter by the hand and shakily walked inside the chapel. Although the service did proceed, the first Kaddish went unsaid. I looked around and noticed that there were only nine men present, and my heart sank. Even my aggressiveness in demanding the right to pray could not gain me the right to recite Kaddish, because I did not count in the *minyan*. I left the synagogue that evening with tears of frustration.

Getting 10 men to fulfill their obligation to make a *minyan* was a dilemma facing many of the synagogues which we attended. The huge and elaborate structures were as empty as the one-room places of worship. And when nine men and I were present, the same scene unfolded: telephone calls were made, pleas were sent out, services were missed, and Kaddishes were not recited.

In the synagogue in which I prayed most often, this became a time to be dreaded by all. The men who prayed daily with me always breathed a sigh of relief when the tenth man appeared. Although these men have been committed to the Jewish laws concerning the *minyan* for all of their lives,

my continued presence had given them ample opportunity to become conscious of the fact that their excluding me from a quorum caused me a great deal of pain. They recognized the signs of distress as soon as the rituals of "male head counting," "male hunting," etc., began. They knew that I felt insulted when they counted the men whom they "lassoed" in as they were passing by. They knew that I was indignant that they counted the men on the last row reading the newspaper or sleeping—a man would not count me, when I was prepared to worship along with them.

The eleven months of mourning for our mother have passed, but the changes with us brought about by our experiences with reciting Kaddish are permanent.

My sister and I have experienced beautiful moments of peace and communion that Judaism has to offer those who follow its practices on a daily basis. But we have experienced also the feelings of anguish and anger that accompany the insults and exclusionary practices of discrimination. These experiences have made us more committed as Jews and more militant as women in demanding our right to be included on an equal basis.

We would like to encourage more women to recite Kaddish for their parents. It is important both for the mourners themselves and for all Jewish women. When discrimination is not encountered, they will indeed derive comfort and support from the community during a time of intense grief and loneliness.

But it is equally important that Jewish women become aware that this discrimination exists. Like most Jewish men, we are not involved in the daily *minyan*, and are unaware of the discrimination against women exhibited there by members of the Jewish community in the name of Jewish law. We can easily avoid this discrimination, but it will do little to raise our status and the status of our daughters to do so.

For generations, sons believed that reciting Kaddish demonstrated the deep abiding honor in which they held the memory of their parents. We hope that women will believe that their reciting Kaddish for their parents demonstrates the same respect and affection.

We hope that no one and nothing will inhibit women from believing in the meaning and purpose of the Kaddish, and that no one and nothing will deny them the right to recite it alongside all members of the Jewish community.

VER MY DEAD BODY...

YL COHEN

The Jewish prayer book contains four different funeral prayers to call attention to special praise due the dead person as an individual belonging to one or the other social classes. These are:

All women;
Ordinary men;
Distinguished rabbis; and
Men of eminence.

The special prayer that is read for a woman is quite different from the one read for a man. At the funeral of a rabbi, an eulogistic poem is read before the reading of the prayer for an ordinary man. There is a special additional poem for a man of eminence to be said prior to the prayer for an ordinary man.

The prayer said for a woman at her funeral begins:

*A virtuous woman who can find—
Above corals is her worth....
Praise her of the fruit of her hands
And let her own works praise her in
the gates... (Proverbs 31)*

These words are said for all women—and for women. These words are not praise-only. They are demeaning.

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Consider first an interpretation that many women and most men would see as an offering of praise: a virtuous woman (dutiful, good) is worth far more than any valuable material goods. We praise her because we recognize her accomplishments—"the fruit of her hands.... her own works...." What is demeaning is that a good woman is rated in terms of her productivity. Substitute "cow" for woman and any appropriate part of the cow's anatomy for "hands" and you have a set of words that apply to any beast of burden you might wish to praise.

Compare the prayer said at a man's funeral:

*Better is a good name than
precious ointment
And the day of death than the
day of birth.
The end of the matter after all
has been heard:
Revere God and keep
His commandments.
For this is the whole duty of man.
May the pious be joyful in glory
And rejoice in their repose.*

This prayer begins by recognizing that a man has a name ("Better is a good name than precious ointment"). It is his name; he is responsible for it. The "day of death is better than the day of birth" because he

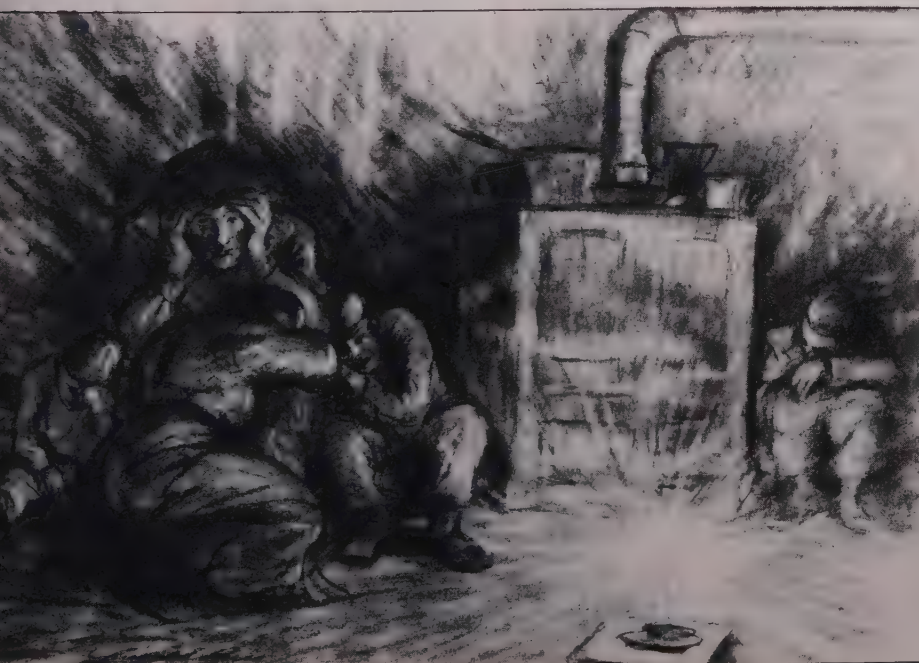
has had the opportunity to do good things and to acquire a good reputation. He does not have a good name because he has been productive—has borne "fruit"—but because he reveres God and keeps His commandments. At the very least, this means he has been just and fair in his dealings with others and that he has obeyed God's law, which must include efforts to study and understand it up to the limits of his ability. It does not matter whether there are any "fruits of his hands." These words said for a man are not applicable to a woman. No woman has a name—good, bad, or indifferent. A woman is something someone "finds." If you are a lucky woman, your productivity will be discovered and appreciated.

Keeping God's commandments is surely necessary for a woman, but tradition has always "excused" the woman from certain obligations, most of which fall into the general categories of prayer and study. At least part of the rationale for "excusing" the woman is that she has other duties that make demands on her time and energy—duties toward her husband. Even unmarried women are "excused" because they are presumed to be part of a household headed by a male to whom they owe allegiance. This explains, perhaps, why the phrase, "this is the whole duty of man" is reserved exclusively for men. Although a man has duties toward women in "his" household, these are never such as to "excuse" him from prayer and study. But a woman's duty is divided between God and some mortal man.

The word *nefesh* (soul) or a synonym does not appear in the prayer for a woman. Instead we pray that "the memory of His daughter... come into His presence." The concept of soul is generally accepted as indicative of personhood. It follows, then, that in this prayer, women are not considered persons. The omission of this one term provides the key to understanding this prayer. Women have identity (a name) only in terms of belonging to some man—their fathers or their husbands. They own nothing except by permission of their owners. They certainly do not own themselves.

What we say to praise a woman at her funeral implies a denial of her personal identity, of her integrity, of the respect and dignity we ascribe to persons. These are reserved for men only.

I count myself as a person. Do not recite the memorial prayer for a woman over me. □



The Kaddish

A CHILDREN'S STORY

BY MARITHA H. FREEDMAN

"Ai, if only she was the boy, she could be the kaddish!"

Miriam watched Grandpa shaking his yarmulked head at her. She summoned the courage of her five-and-a-half years to ask, "What's the kaddish?"

His broad white beard lifted and fell in the flow of a sigh. "Not for you," he said, his large frame lumbering out of the living room into the shop.

Miriam pressed her nose against the bay window, trying to push out the ache of his words. The cold moist glass soothed her lips as she stared upward.

"Mommy," she asked, after a while, "how far away is heaven?"

Quietly, not to disturb the round baby boy nursing at her breast, her mother answered, "Pretty far, dear."

Exactly *how* far, Miriam wanted to go on. Could you go up there to visit somebody? But she was afraid if she kept asking about it, Mommy would start crying again. Ever since Daddy went to heaven in the flu epidemic, Mommy cried when you talked about those things. And it made Miriam's chest hurt.

She lowered her eyes to the bare winter yard. She wished this living room looked out onto the street like the one in the house where she'd lived with Mommy and Daddy. Now, at the grandparents', there was a shop in front and you could hardly see the street, even though there was a giant window. She could read all the red letters on it:

D.B. COHEN
LADIES & GENTS
TAILOR

Next September, when she started school, she would learn to read the words.

Restlessly, Miriam turned to glance toward her mother. The baby was still grasping at the full whiteness of her. The two of them, huddled together on the rocker, looked like one. Miriam felt so alone, she tentatively reached out a hand. But Mommy sat there staring, not seeing anything.

With a small sigh, Miriam started walking around the room. She reached up to run her hands along the top of the gramophone and down the side to the handle. But she didn't play music now.

On the wall above, inside a round picture frame, her uncle in his soldier suit and wide-brimmed hat looked down at her. They said he would be sad when he came home from the war and didn't find her Daddy.

Trying not to think about that, she edged her way to the doorway of the shop. Grandpa stood with a tape measure around his neck, fitting a jacket on a figure with wire legs and no head. She looked wistfully toward the table on which large spools of thread and pieces of flat chalk

arid jagged samples of material on little cardboard squares were ttered. She longed to touch and arrange them, but the thought of going into the shop frightened her. Grandpa looked like God in the Bible story book—and he didn't like her because she wasn't a boy!

Her lower lip trembled. Nobody liked her anymore. Daddy used to swing her up in the air and call her his big girl and Mommy used to hug her with her, too. But the whole world changed since the uncles and aunts came to pack up everything and take Mommy and the baby and her to the grandparents.

Grandpa might like her if she could be the kaddish. Why couldn't she? Suddenly, she thought of asking Grandma for the answer. Her eyes widened with hope as she ran back through the house in search of her.

Grandma was sitting at the round dining room table reading a *Chumash* book. A circle of light from the colored glass chandelier hung from a chain like an open umbrella surrounded her. Her lined fingers followed each word, left to right, across the page. Miriam stood before her a moment before speaking.

"Bubba," she said—they liked her to say "Grandma" and "Grandpa" in Yiddish—"what's the kaddish?"

Grandma held a finger on the open book and turned to peer over her silver-rimmed glasses.

"The kaddish," Miriam prompted, reaching out to touch little creases in the paper wrinkles on the aged hands.

"Is a prayer," Grandma answered after a moment.

"A prayer? I know what a prayer is."

"Is special prayer—when someone die."

"Oh," Miriam considered this. "You mean so God will be nice to him?"

Grandma half-nodded.

"But *zedda* said if I were the boy, I could *be* the kaddish."

"Ai, what the *zedda* *sagt*! He mean a boy goes to shul to say. Is a man pray for a son—to have a kaddish."

"Doesn't a man like to have a little girl?"

Grandma put her arms around her and drew her close. "Of course, course," she said. "You know your Daddy love you."

As Miriam nested her curly little head on Grandma's shoulder, she thought hard. After a few minutes, she lifted her lips to Grandma's ear.

"Bubba," she said, "I want to be the kaddish."

"Keend, keend, is not for you." Grandma patted her comfortingly. "Don't worry, everyone know you a good girl."

Miriam's eyes welled with tears. "But I want to be my Daddy's kaddish!" she cried.

Pressed against Grandma, she wept until Grandma, drying Miriam's tears with her apron, whispered a suggestion. Then, hand in hand, they walked to the doorway of the shop. Remaining there, Grandma hugged her with a hug to go in alone.

Miriam took small, hesitant steps across the broad linoleum floor. She stopped alongside the sewing machine and watched Grandpa's seesawing the square pedal while his hands swiftly guided the material past the plunging needle.

swallowing hard, she cleared her throat. "Zedda."

He slowed his pedaling.

"Zedda," she said, her voice rising shakily, "will you please take me to synagogue to say the kaddish for my Daddy?"

Grandpa's footwork came to a gradual stop. His gray head turned as studied her serious little face.

"Next holidays you'll go with the *mammen*," his deep voice said, not kindly.

Miriam shook her head, gathering strength in her determination. "I want to say it now, like a *real* kaddish."

"*Nein*, is not for girl, is for son."

"I can say it as good as a son."

Grandpa reached for her hand. Patiently he tried to explain. "Always a son to say in shul, to show he remembers."

"A girl remembers, too."

"Sure, sure," Grandpa patted her hand. "Is all right, I know you remember."

"But I want my Daddy and God to know!"

"*Ai-yi-yi!*" Grandpa looked to the ceiling. "Is not done. Men in shul like, not let a girl—"

"Pop," her mother's voice from the doorway startled them both. "Let her."

At the sight of the two women standing there, Grandpa rose and w up his hands.

Miriam was afraid he was going to send her from the shop; instead, strong arms reached to lift her onto the big table next to the pressing machine.

"Learn good!" he warned, picking out a pair of trousers from the piled pile to press. "Now say after me—'*Yis-gad-dal, v'yis-kad-dal*...'"

In a quivering voice, Miriam struggled to say the strange, difficult words that were now so full of meaning for her. Above the hiss and smell of the steam, she repeated and repeated them—it seemed like a hundred



times—until she could say the kaddish without any prompting.

"*Genug!*" Grandpa said finally, reaching over to help her off the table. "You practice more tonight. Tomorrow we go to morning prayers, but I don't know—" He shook his head.

Miriam fell asleep that night whispering the words of the kaddish. And bundled up waiting for Grandpa early the next day, she said them some more in her mind.

The sun was not yet up to warm the cold day as they started out. Grandpa walked fast. Miriam had to take little skipping steps to keep up with him. They were halfway down a steep hill when he pointed out the synagogue at the foot of it. Fear overcame her as she thought about the men who didn't want her there. She spun around to run back, but the hill made her think of the sliding board at the playground and how, when she reached the bottom, Daddy used to be there to catch her. Then she wanted to say the kaddish for him more than ever, and rushed to catch up with Grandpa.

As he led her along the aisle, Miriam tried not to look toward where the men were gathered. She stared fixedly up at the gold lions standing on their hind legs holding the white curved tablets.

When they reached the front benches, Grandpa pointed for her to sit down. The men were waiting for him.

Wrapped in broad, fringed shawls and wearing yarmulkes, they began chanting prayers, swaying back and forth.

Miriam watched wide-eyed.

After what seemed a long time, Grandpa came back and took her hand.

"*Kum*," he said, "*off'n bema*."

They had barely started up the steps to the little platform when murmuring swelled among the men. Their heads shook forbiddingly. Miriam stepped back to the floor while Grandpa went on to hold up his hands and say, "*Shah!*" But they kept murmuring.

Miriam stood rigid on the spot below. She bit her lips to keep them from trembling. They weren't going to let her say it! She wouldn't be the kaddish, after all. But she *had* to be!

Desperately gasping a long, deep breath, she cried out with all her might above the sounds of protest: "*Yis-gad-dal, v'yis-kad-dash, sh'may ra-bo*..."

The men quieted as her prayer, clear and plaintive, echoed throughout the synagogue.

They remained still after she finished.

Grandpa came down and lifted her up and, his beard brushing against her face, kissed her on the forehead. Flushed with fulfillment, she stood next to him while he folded his prayer shawl.

One by one, the men came over to shake her hand, or pat her on the head, or say, "*Zehr gut, zehr gut*."

The sun had risen when they left the synagogue. Walking next to Grandpa, Miriam took off one of her mittens and slipped her fingers into his palm to feel the comforting pressure of his broad hand.

Close together and in step, they started up the hill for home.

Martha H. Freedman has been a free-lance writer for many years and a state government Information Writer. Since retirement, she's working as a teacher of adult education creative writing courses. She is the mother of two career women and the grandmother of 10-year-old feminist Jenna.

GROUPS AND PROJECTS

A new Jewish feminist consciousness-raising and study group, comprised of women spanning the Jewish religious/political spectrum, has been organized in Houston. The group meets on a regular basis to exchange ideas on issues of concern to Jewish women and share in the creation of new rituals. (One member wrote a ceremony celebrating the onset of menstruation for Jewish girls.) Information on the group may be obtained from:

Sondra Kaplan
1717 Wroxtan Ct. #1
Houston TX 77005

Two special Israel-based funds have been established recently to serve as conduits for contributions to Israeli feminist projects. The Women's Aid Fund, chaired by Marcia Freedman, former MK, was responsible for establishing Israel's first battered women's shelter, several women's centers, a rape crisis center, a legal aid bureau and one of the feminist presses. The second fund, known as Feminist Projects in Israel, was recently created by Dr. Shoshana Klebanov, a professor at Hebrew University, and has undertaken as its first project the funding of a feminist documentary film on women in the Israeli army, to be made by Shulamit Eshel. Both funds are presently soliciting contributions in the United States, to be used for the establishment of two more shelters, a printing press and a quarterly newspaper. Funds may be sent directly to:

The Women's Aid Fund
99 Hanassi Avenue
Haifa, Israel
Feminist Projects in Israel
POB 33711
Tel Aviv, Israel

There are also two U.S.-based groups which have been actively raising funds for a variety of feminist causes and projects in Israel. One, U.S.-Israel Women-to-Women, has as its credo "Women must help women." Mentioned in these pages when it was still in its formative stages (LILITH #6), Women-to-Women has raised funds from what it has termed "women of independent means" and has already funded several of the projects sponsored both by The Women's Aid Fund and by Israel Feminist Projects, and is currently underwriting the publication of a booklet on divorce problems faced by women in Israel. To make a tax-deductible

contribution or for further information about a nationwide network of Women-to-Women supporters now being formed, write:

U.S.-Israel Women-to-Women
4 Sniffen Court
156 East 36 St.
New York NY 10016

The New Israel Fund, set up several months ago to provide support for a wide range of social-change causes in Israel, including environmental issues, community organizing, Arab-Jewish relations and women's rights, has a brochure detailing goals and projects funded so far.

New Israel Fund
22 Miller Ave.
Mill Valley CA 94941
(415) 383-4866

LIBRARIES

A unique membership library, containing more than 300 volumes dealing with Jewish women and appropriately called "Eemee*Beetee" (my mother, my daughter, in Hebrew) was founded in October, 1979 by wife-and-husband team Sher Rice and Jeffrey Rosenberg. Located in the couple's apartment in Exton, Pennsylvania, the library's collection includes books in the history, religion, biography, travel and reference categories, in addition to a children's books and periodicals sections. Membership in the Eemee*Beetee Library, which is affiliated with the Association of Jewish Libraries and the International Society of Jewish Librarians, is open to Jewish feminists (men and women) in Chester County, Pennsylvania and other areas, by special arrangement (all prospective members must file applications). For more information, write:

Sher Rice
The Eemee*Beetee Library of the Jewish Woman and Girl
190 Apple Drive
Exton PA 19341
(215) 363-8644

A nationwide effort to rescue old Yiddish books has begun in Amherst, Massachusetts. The National Yiddish Book Exchange, a non-profit organization founded by young graduate students of Yiddish literature and administered by faculty members of Amherst, Hampshire, Mt. Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts, plans to collect discarded Yiddish books from homes and synagogues throughout North America. Books will



YIVO

be brought to a central repository where they will be restored, catalogued and shelved, and then made available for sale to teachers, students and university libraries. Donations of Yiddish books and periodicals, and financial support, are urgently needed. Please contact:

Aaron Lansky
National Yiddish Book Exchange
P.O. Box 969
Amherst MA 01004

FILMS

A new slide show by Penina Williams entitled, "The Goddess and the Witch," traces the history of the artistic depiction of women as goddesses and witches from pre-historic times through the 17th century, the height of witchcraft persecution in Europe. Specifically, it deals with the unique connection between women, Jews and witchcraft persecution. Ms. Williams lectures on the subject, using the slide show as illustration. Fee is negotiable, depending upon traveling time and expenses. Interested individuals should contact:

Penina Williams
4710 Springfield Avenue
Philadelphia PA 19143

"Find the right guy, live a happy life and stay away from the shrink," Joe Cohen advises his daughter. Views such as this one touch the essence of "Joe and Maxi," a documentary movie which traces a young Jewish woman's attempts to carve out her own identity amidst various family pressures.

Maxi Cohen is the main figure in, and co-producer (with Joel Gold) of this film, which explores her relationship with her father Joe, a remote person whose life revolves around the ownership of a fishing and clamming dock. The film begins just eight months after the death of Maxi's mother from cancer; during the filming, Joe learns that he, too, has cancer. The filming continues as Maxi's

two younger brothers, Barry Danny, are forced to decide whether to give up their life goals in order to help their father. By the film's end, Maxi matures and comes to understand herself better.

"Joe and Maxi" is a tender account of isolation in family interactions, particularly in father/daughter relationships. Maxi struggles to assert her independence from a father who insists that marriage is essential for all "normal" women, that having babies is "a natural process" women must go through; they don't want headaches, and that not to have children shows a lack of social responsibility.

The film points to the lack of communication in many present-day Jewish households in which parents, particularly fathers, cannot understand their daughters' wishes to become complete people.

—Wendy A.

For information:
"JOE AND MAXI"
31 Greene St.
New York NY 10013

PUBLICATIONS

The Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Newsletter is a very rich source of information for historical, sociological and anthropological materials dealing with Jewish women. Put out by the American Folklore Society and the Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, the newsletter includes reports of relevant conferences and lectures, notices on grant sources, and listings of library archives, research institutes, publications and media projects.

All articles, communication and requests for subscription should be addressed to:

The Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Newsletter
Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies
YIVO
1048 Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10028

The Woman's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education in San Diego published last spring a new Women's Haggadah written by a group of seven women affiliated with the Institute. The Haggadah explores the role played by women in the Exodus from Egypt and tells the stories of other Jewish women who "participated in the ongoing struggle for freedom" throughout history. It may be used independently, or in conjunction with a traditional Haggadah.

and see" or "seek enlightenment" is the title of the Yiddish-language Torah for women, with the portion of the k and folk tales. Tsena Rena was the first resource that enabled women to educate themselves.

price per copy is \$3.50
50¢ postage (please add
postage for each additional
, and mail check to:
**an's Institute for
Continuing Jewish Education
54th Street
Diego CA 92105**

ble copies of *The Paper
Pomegranate*, the bulletin of the
Pomegranate Guild of Judaic
needlework (see TR, LILITH #6)
now \$4.00, due to its expand-
size. The bulletin is available

**Pomegranate Guild of
Judaic Needlework
Fanshaw Avenue
ers NY 10705**

recent publications of the
Commission on Social Action of
Judaism, Union of
American Hebrew Congrega-
, outline programs on
women's concerns for use in
synagogues.

*The Equal Rights Amendment
Packet* was prepared to
congregants explore the
issues and launch appropriate
projects.

Jewish Options for the 80's is
page "consciousness-rais-
ing" designed to "encourage
congregants to examine beliefs
attitudes that perpetuate
discrimination and stereotypes
toward women so that we can
remove remaining barriers to the
participation of women in
Jewish community and the
community at large." Among the
issues covered are Bat Mitzvah,
mother-daughter relations, ERA,
ordination and women rabbis. The
packet also features a 20-item
checklist for rating congrega-
tions on their sexist and non-
sexist practices. The cost is \$3
copy. Both publications are
available from:

**Commission on Social Action
of American Hebrew
Congregations
Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10021
Annette Daum, Religious
Action Consultant**

Stream, a "periodic news-
letter on women's concerns,"
launched last May by the
American Jewish Committee to
report its national and local
work in this area.
Other recent AJC publications
going to women include a
packet, *Single Parent Families*,
put by the organization's
newly created National Jewish
Family Center; a study entitled
*Status of Women In Jewish
Organizations of Greater Pitts-
burgh*, issued by its Pittsburgh

chapter and the National Coun-
cil of Jewish Women; and a kit
of materials on women in the
Middle East. These publications
are available from:
**The American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th St.
New York NY 10022**

CALLS FOR WRITERS

The Jewish Women's Resource
Center is sponsoring two pro-
jects—an academic competition
and an anthology of short read-
ings—aimed at promoting
original written work by and
about Jewish women. The topic
of the academic competition is
"The Jewish Woman in History."
Papers should not exceed 10,000
words, and must be submitted
by December 31, 1980. Judges
will include Blu Greenberg,
author of a forthcoming book on
the Jewish woman, and Dr.
Paula Hyman, Assistant Profes-
sor of Jewish History at Colum-
bia University. The anthology
will be composed of original
poems, and other short pieces
(1-2 pages). Entries should be
submitted immediately to:

**The Jewish Women's Resource
Center
92nd Street YM/YWHA Library
1395 Lexington Avenue
New York NY 10028**

Biblio Press, a publisher of
"alternative Jewish" materials,
is seeking writers of current
well-researched work on the
following subjects: Women's
Voting Trends (with material on
Jewish women); Contemporary
Jewish Women and Sex; Jewish
Women In Business (historical
survey); Science Fiction based
on the Bible; Collecting Jewish
Antiques (a guide); Jewish
Feminist Socialists in the United
States, Past and Present; and
Folklore ("grandmothers' tales").
Manuscripts may be pamphlet-
length (50 pages min.) or book-
length (125 pages and up).
Interested individuals should
send outlines and writing sam-
ples to:

**Biblio Press
P.O. Box 22
Fresh Meadows NY 11365**

The editorial committee of the
Sarah Eisenstein Series, com-
posed of books relating to
"women, consciousness and
revolutionary change," is plan-
ning a book of collected pieces
on *The Politics of Sexuality*, to
be edited by Ann Snitow, Chris-
tine Stansell and Sharon Thomp-
son. Topics include historical
overviews of sexuality as a
changing social form, the social
definition of sexuality, the image

of sexuality portrayed by popu-
lar culture; the media and the
arts and current political strug-
gles revolving around sexual
issues.

The committee is interested in
original pieces and reprints of
varying lengths, in the form of
notes, analytical articles,
stories, poems, journal excerpts,
illustrations, picture essays or
short historical documents.
Small honorarium. Deadline for
final manuscripts is January 1
1981. Send 3 copies of outlines,
reprints of work to:

**The Sarah Eisenstein Series
c/o Sharon Thompson
P.O.B. 1161, Stuyvesant Station
New York NY 10009**

Karen Payne is editing a collec-
tion of letters between mothers
and daughters. Her book (to be
published in 1981) explores
issues raised by the women's
liberation movement within the
context of the mother-daughter
relationship. The letters express
their writers' feelings about
sexuality, intimate relationships,
marriage, children, abortion and
politics. Send the letters, with
pertinent biographical informa-
tion to:

**Karen Payne
12 Quernmore Road
London N4, England**

GAMES

Ernestine Rose, Emma Goldman,
Emma Lazarus and Gertrude Stein
are four Jewish women featured in
a unique series of biographical card
games celebrating the lives and
achievements of great American
women who made history.

Great Women is actually the
name of the games. There are three
games in the series. Each deck has
cards with photos of and facts
about 10 women and is played like
gin rummy. The names are: Fore-
mothers, Founders and Firsts, and
Poets and Writers.

The games can be ordered at \$6
per deck or \$16 for a set of all three,
from:

**The Great Women Card
Company
310 East 46 St. Box 1L
New York, NY 10017**

ARTISTS

Artist Michele Zackheim's
unique collage of handcolored
xeroxed family photographs and
drawings depicting historical
personalities and events is
currently on exhibit at the Judah
Magnes Museum in Berkeley,
California. Entitled "A Diary: The
Rites of Passage of a Jewish
Woman In America," the collage
is Zackheim's creative saga of

the people, places and emotions
so intricately woven together to
form her life. The 15-piece
exhibit is enhanced by Zack-
heim's poetry, which describes
what it was like to be a "nigger-
lover" and a "dirty Jew" in
white, small-town America. For
more information on the show
and the artist, contact:

**Ann Ferrier
Hill's Gallery
1110 W. San Francisco
Santa Fe NM 87501**

Hand-crafted ceramic ware and
Jewish ceremonial objects are
the specialties of Fern Amper,
an artist who has exhibited her
work extensively at shows
throughout the Northeast.
Among her most popular items
are kiddush cups, *mezuzot*,
seder plates, *havdallah* sets,
cookie jars, Shabbat candle
plates, clocks and fruit bowls.
Each piece is individually
created and decorated, reflect-
ing "the Jewish tradition of
making one's ritual life beauti-
ful." Brochures and order forms
may be obtained from:

**Fern Amper
65-50 Wetherole Street
Rego Park NY 11374**

"The Jewish Woman: A Portrait
in Her Own Words," a dramatic
reading for four or more voices
by Marcia Cohn Spiegel, pre-
sents the history of Jewish
women using poetry written by
women dating from biblical
times until the present day. The
cost for single scripts is 75¢,
and they can be obtained from:

**The National Federation of
Temple Sisterhoods
838 Fifth Avenue
New York NY 10021**

Ms. Spiegel also performs dra-
matic programs using women's
poetry to explore their family
relationships, roles in Jewish
history and religious convic-
tions. Fee is negotiable, depend-
ing upon the group's size and
budget, but it must include
travel expenses. Please write:
**Marcia Spiegel
4856 Ferncreek Drive
Rolling Hills Estates CA 90274
(213) 378-3703, or (213) 373-4018**

Janet Leuchter sings traditional
Yiddish folk songs in an authen-
tic style, providing interesting
and concise commentaries on
the background of each song
performed. Her program offers a
rare and fascinating view of
Yiddish culture and Jewish
history of the last two centuries.
For further information, call:
(212) 866-1312

RUTH KLUGER 1906-1980

AN APPRECIATION BY PEGGY MANN

I met Ruth quite by accident, at a restaurant in Tel Aviv. I was with the Director of the Israel Government Tourist Office, for I was doing travel articles on Israel. Suddenly he said, "You see that woman sitting alone at the table by the window? Her name is Ruth Kluger. Just after World War II her name was so well known that people who *didn't* know her thought it was some sort of code name. Those who *did* know her, or knew of her, said that her name was synonymous with Jewish survival.

"The Paris postmen certainly knew her," he continued. "She received hundreds of letters addressed simply 'Ruth. Paris, France—from people asking her to try to find their relatives.

"At the end of the war Ruth was sent to Europe as the first official representative of the Jews of Palestine. She was the first Jew from Palestine to enter the death camps a day or so after they were liberated by the Allies. Some people called her the Israeli Joan of Arc."

"It sounds as though she should 'be a book,'" I said.

He nodded. "You're right. And the most important story is the totally unknown one."

He told me then about *aliyah bet*, the illegal immigrant movement, and the Mossad founded in 1938 to smuggle Jews out of Europe and into British-ruled Palestine. Of the 400,000 immigrants who came to Palestine in the 10 years preceding the declaration of statehood, about half were "illegals." In 1948 when the infant nation had to fight off the invading armies of seven Arab states, one-third of the population were "illegals"—

smuggled into the country in the movement launched by ten young Jewish men and the beautiful, persuasive 23-year old redhead named Ruth Kluger.

"Israel could never have come to statehood," I was told, "and could never have survived, without the added man- and woman-power provided by the illegals."

I was introduced to Ruth, an attractive soft-spoken woman with a quiet charm. I invited her to my hotel room for tea. The room overlooked the Mediterranean and, while we waited for tea to be sent, Ruth walked onto the balcony. She pointed to a red umbrella on the beach.

"Right off the coast there," she said, "is the spot where the illegal ship the *Tiger Hill*, rammed as close as she could get to shore on the day before World War II broke out. The Mossad had organized quite a unique cue operation. Tel Avivians were secretly asked to sunbathe on the beach with extra towels, extra clothes. As the illegals came swimming to shore they were quickly wrapped in beach towels and dressed in bathing suits; their old clothes were hidden. By the time the British Tommies arrived no one could tell who was an illegal and who was a bona fide sun-bather. Tel Avivian."

Ruth laughed. "That's how 834 more 'illegals' entered Palestine."

As she spoke on, I learned that Ruth had been left in charge of the *Tiger Hill* in Rumania—when "the secret ship" was suddenly discovered.

EXCERPTS FROM THE ADDRESS GIVEN BY AMBASSADOR EHUD AVRIEL AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR RUTH KLUGER, HELD IN TEL AVIV:

For over 40 years I have been in contact with Ruth. We met, sometimes more frequently, sometimes only after long intervals; sometimes we worked together on an assignment on behalf of the Haganah or the Mossad. I first met Ruth in 1939, on the eve of the Great World War; I was then a new recruit in the ranks of the

Mossad. She had already made a name for herself as the fearless 'tribune of persecuted and wretched Jews before the masters of their fate. Driven by her limitless faith, she literally was able to move mountains and to create those rare and elusive islands of salvation in the furious ocean that swallowed its victims whole.

When the war ended, Ruth was sent to Europe, as the first representative of the Jews of Palestine. To the survivors she was a kind of Joan of Arc. As more emissaries arrived on the

scene she became the head of the movement. She received orders from Ben-Gurion and acted on them only.

Ruth never wavered when the need arose to confront the principal actors in the drama of the nations. With General Eisenhower, Marshal De Gaulle she maintained a relationship as between equals. No one of her generation would have even dreamt of turning to Eisenhower in that grim winter of 1945 to enlist his cooperation with the Jewish

the Rumanian Prime Minister, the feared, one-eyed Calinescu—who ordered it impounded.

If Ruth's rescue of this ship had been fiction, it might have been deemed "too incredible to have happened." But it was all true. It involved a host of characters ranging from cut-throats to the movie-star Foreign Minister, a Greek Orthodox priest who looked like an Old Testament prophet to King Carol himself.

The *Tiger Hill* was only one of the ships which Ruth organized as the chief of Mossad operations in the Balkans.

Ruth Kluger's story, the subject of *The Last Escape: The Launching of the Largest Secret Rescue Movement of All Time*, was a thrilling and inspiring one. I feel honored to have known her and to have brought her story to the public.

Peggy Mann's by-line has appeared in most American mass-market magazines. She is the author of over 30 books, some for young readers. *The Last Escape: The Launching of the Largest Secret Rescue Movement of All Time*, which she co-authored with Ruth Kluger, was published by Doubleday in 1973 and became a Literary Guild Alternate. Just reissued in paperback by Pinnacle Books, the book can be ordered from Pinnacle's cash sales department, 271 Madison Ave., New York, 10016, \$2.70. *The Secret Ship* (Doubleday, 1978) is a version of the story for young readers. Peggy Mann's latest book, on the Holocaust, "Gizelle, the Children!", will be published in November by Everett House.



Ruth Kluger, shown with her mother, a life-long Zionist.

and the organizers of "illegal" immigration. Ruth felt that it was she who was somehow "an opportunity to help." After she had had her session with the Commander, he told her: "Never call on me whenever you believe that I can help to your great work." She, and her mother, obtained in that cold and inclement weather the huge ship, the M/S Ascania, which came from Southern France twice, with 1000 children.

This was Ruth: with her human instinct, with her total dedication, with the simplicity of her pure soul she would make locks melt away and open gates. Crises and disappointments never affected her. She would always return to her many-splendoured activities with renewed energy and with conventional enterprise. When we last met, just before she became terminally ill, we talked, as always, about plans for further work; she was full of drive and brilliant ideas. And suddenly her voice fell

silent.

Those who put their trust in Ruth and believed in her and in the depth of her faith were rewarded, through work with her, with the extraordinary experience of elation and joy that came from endeavors to strengthen the Jewish people and to lighten the burden of those who carry on their shoulders the weight of the Jewish condition.

We are poorer and more alone in the great void she left behind.

A MAP OF MOTHERHOOD

With Child: A Diary of Motherhood, by Phyllis Chesler. Thomas Y. Crowell (1979), \$9.95.
by Barbara Joans

Phyllis Chesler's *With Child* has put motherhood on the map. And what a map it is. She spares us nothing. Fear, pain, joy, terror and magic kaleidoscope before our bedazzled eyes. The diary opens with her awareness of pregnancy and ends with the child's first birthday.

Three major interwoven themes compete for our attention: fear, work, and wonder.

My teeth are chattering. My fear—seems to rise up out of history, to swirl through my bowels, all the way up to my teeth. I'm afraid of you. Who are you, that I tremble so?

Chesler develops the theme of fear with agonizing clarity. She fears the baby. She fears her growing vulnerability, her lack of control, the enormity of the responsibility and the weight of the family finances. She fears she will not love the child. She fears the burden of children will silence her writer's voice. She fears the pain, the desperation, the physical exhaustion of pregnancy.

She is unprepared. There is no way for her to become prepared. She asks perfectly sensible questions. Why can't she be prepared? Other cultures train their people for the roles expected of them. They are not shocked into awareness. America, however, does not train for motherhood. Despite the pressures on women to become mothers, each woman goes through this experience fundamentally alone.

This is not the aloneness of existential consciousness but the isolation of silence. It appears to be a conspiracy of silence. The silence causes damage to each new-born mother. She faces the experience without advice, knowledge or help from other mothers. The isolation felt throughout pregnancy becomes one of Chesler's keenest problems as she searches the literature for a pathway into motherhood. Finally, just prior to birth, she links the problems of silence to patriarchy. She asks:

"Is it too dangerous to treat motherhood as so existentially grand an event—when most men don't become mothers?" She flashes an ancient answer:

"But to become a mother is to open the gates of your womb to admit life—and death—into the world. It is so significant an act, it is devalued. Falsely flattered. Lied about. Lived alone."

I'm afraid of being called selfish (for complaining), stupid (for wanting to stay home—or for having to leave home to earn money), really stupid (for having expected to be spared this problem), incompetent,



a "whiner" (about what every other mother takes for granted, knew about all along, handles magnificently, without complaint.

The next theme, work, comes strongly into focus during labor and continues through the book. All mothers are working mothers except perhaps the very rich.

The amount of time necessary to care for an infant is total time. One infant takes up all the time there is. The full-time mother literally works around the clock. She is no longer in charge of her own life. She is controlled by the ceaseless demands of infancy.

Here Chesler's experiences differ somewhat from other mothers'. She has a mothering husband and a distant, unhelpful mother. This curious reversal raises as many problems as it solves. Her husband begins by assuming the major portion of child-care so as to "free" her for other work and breast-feeding. But it is soon necessary for her to hire outside help. She discovers, however, that sufficient, affordable, reliable, long-term child help does not exist in New York City. She has to accept continual temporary arrangements all of which take time and more effort to arrange.

"Why don't the headlines scream 'Child Care Emergency' daily? Why are the single-income families still silent about the systematic 'drowning' of mothers into housewifery and childcare? The 'drowning' of fathers into money-earning?" She responds with withdrawal:

"I go through my days stunned, bitter, like an animal trapped into laborious captivity, like a prisoner of war."

And still she works. She must. Her work—writing, teaching, making speeches—supports the family.

In colors of blood and air I spin without

stopping: colon, foot, eye. By day, by night for nine months, I weave you: precisely faithfully. No wonder I'm slow at other tasks. What did we spin today? The shape of your smile? A last-minute gesture?

The final theme, wonder, helps to balance the dangerously overloaded scales of motherhood. Throughout this journal of fear, questions, pain and overwork, are glimpses of great joy and love.

Chesler is not afraid to express the peace, the genuine contentment she feels while watching her sleeping child. She gloats, she boasts, she romanticizes over this child.

The relationship between Chesler and mother is, at best, problematic. They are constantly, painfully. The mother wishes her daughter were a copy of herself. She would be pleased if Chesler stopped writing and took on full-time child-care. She would have her come the Total Housewife. Personally, I think that her mother would not be satisfied with anything Chesler chose to do. If she stayed home her mother would complain about her pot roast. We do not know the origin of the ancient quarrel or if it's endemic to mothers and daughters, but in a book on motherhood is a painful reminder of maternal rejection.

The husband, though shadowy, is compassionate, tender, nurturing and perceptible. When he ultimately rejects full time child-care in order to return to school we are not without sympathy. It is his unique position as mother, however, that permits us this sympathy. We would not grant it to a woman.

Chesler asks more questions than can be answered in any one book. Each entry in the diary is our starting point for research on motherhood. She neither analyzes her "data" nor provides a comprehensive theory of motherhood. She has written not a scholarly treatise but a prose poem.

DRY THROUGH VICTIMS' EYES

ry: *A Novel*, by Elsa Morante. Avon
back (1979), \$2.95.

stelle Gilson

his is a novel that can transform the way
see the inarticulate, defenseless creatures
e world. Elsa Morante, a 62-year-old re-
living in a small apartment in Rome with
cats for company, wrote *La Storia* to give
to the victims of power: to dogs, cats,
s and birds—to prostitutes and pimps—
e poor—to inarticulate intellectuals—to
who "in their vulnerable bodies...sense
universal power that can devour them and
ilate them, for their guilt in being born."
he central character of *History: A Novel*
Ramundo Mancuso, daughter of a Jewish
er and an anarchist father, a victim of
ry, "a woman, who neither rich nor poor,
aged...to a species that lives (perhaps
angered?) and dies and gives no news of
except...perhaps in the crime reports."
he book, issued in Italy in 1974, begins
a brief account of world historical events
1900 through 1940. Each year of Ida's life
1941 to 1947 forms a chapter prefaced by
count of what the powers of the world
doing. No matter what happens to its
ns, "history," Morante tells us, "con-
s."

When the novel begins in January, 1941,
s 37, a widow with a teenage fascist son,
. Half-Jewish, fearful and worn beyond

her years, she is raped by a drunken Nazi
soldier, a boy not much older than her own
son. The child born of this rape, Useppe, is a
precocious, graceful, joyful, loving creature.
Before long, Ida and the baby are bombed out
and move to a shelter teeming with refugees—
poor, filthy, exuberant Romans, Neapolitan-
tans, black marketeers with their birds, cats



and babies.' Useppe, "too beautiful for this
world," undernourished and undersized,
begins to suffer severe epileptic attacks as
knowledge of cruelty, pain and death come
before his eyes.

The most complicated figure in the novel is
Davide Segre, a young Jew, an intellectual and
anarchist, who seems to speak for Morante. He
cannot love anyone, and all of his dreams and
plans for defeating the world's oppressors fail.
His book is unwritten. His speeches are un-
heard. He cannot renounce his body's desires
nor avoid its betrayals. He wants to be a fac-
tory worker but vomits each working day. He
condemns violence but murders a Nazi atro-
ciously.

This is a passionate book that does not turn
away from horror. Yet it is not a depressing
book. Amid the horror, Morante's characters
continue to hope and to love. Unfortunately,
with the exception of Segre they do not think.
Nor are they, with the exception, again, of
Segre and little Useppe, sensitive to the feelings
of others. The inability of Morante's characters
to see moral choices or to struggle effectively
with the circumstances of their own lives,
undoubtedly reflects her views of "victims."

The hope Morante brings is born of the
human spirit. The very last words of the book
are not Morante's but those of a prisoner: "All
the seeds failed, except one. I don't know what
it is, but it is probably a flower and not a
weed."

of *Our People*, by David C. Gross.
oliday (1979), \$14.95.

ride of *Our People* is a *shandeh* for the
n. A 424-page volume obviously intended
the Bar Mitzvah market, it is poorly written
pooring, even worst than your average text.
rents buy this to turn the Bar Mitzvah
hik on to Yiddishkeit, save your money:
id is probably turned off enough already.
spoke of Bar and not Bat Mitzvah ad-
ly, because besides being poorly written
pooring, the book is an insult to women. Of
"outstanding Jewish Men and Women"
mine), Gross managed to dig up only 14
of the female sex. Yes, 14. And they are
order of appearance): Golda Meir, "the
Prime Minister"; Anne Frank; the ubiqui-
Rebecca Gratz; Lena Kuchler; Emma Laz-
Hannah Senesh; Rosalyn Yalow; Haviva
Miriam Ben-Porat; Bess Myerson, "the
Jewish Miss America" (no comment);
a Lubetkin; Henrietta Szold; Recha Freier
illian Wald. Pathetic, isn't it? God help us

ot only are the two-to-four-page entries
ach personage poorly written and boring

and the limited number of women insulting,
but there are some important inaccuracies.
One of the most blatant concerns Haviva Reik
who parachuted into Slovakia in the summer
of 1944 to rescue Jews. Gross tells us:

"She reached her destination in Slovakia
only to find that the names and addresses of
possible contacts were outdated. For several
days she hid out in the woods and then joined a
group of Jewish resistance fighters. Almost im-
mediately afterwards, German patrols cap-
tured the partisans including Haviva and exe-
cuted them all." (ital. mine)

Wrong. Comrades of Reik's, interviewed
by *Al Hamishmar* reporter Rafi Benkler in
1964, stated that Reik arrived in Slovakia after
a large territory had been liberated by parti-
sans. She contacted Jews in the area, organized
a committee "whose main task was to organize
aid to the many Jewish refugees" who streamed
into the area from hiding places. She raised
money for food and blankets for 5,000 Jews.

As the Germans began reconquering the
area, Reik and others formed a partisan group
which was attacked by the Germans on
October 31; they were captured and murdered

the next day in a mass slaughter of Jews; their
bodies thrown into a mass grave.

Reik was given the chance to escape death
when the Germans asked if she was Jew. She
said she was and was executed with the rest.

An English translation of this piece is con-
tained in *Israel Horizons* (April, 1964) and is
listed in Aviva Cantor's *Bibliography on the
Jewish Woman*.

What is Gross' excuse for his gross inaccu-
racies, given the availability of material? Could
he have confused Reik's story with Senesh's?
Was he disturbed by her politics—Reik was a
member of Hashomer Hatzair, the Socialist Zi-
onist youth movement, a fact Gross omits for
no discernible reason.

So do your kids a favor. If you buy books
for their Bat/Bar Mitzvah, try Elizabeth
Koltun's anthology, *The Jewish Woman, New
Perspectives* (Schocken), or *The Jewish Wom-
an in America* by Paula Hyman et. al. (Dial),
or *Written Out of History* by Sondra Henry
and Emily Teitz (Bloch) or Julia Wolf Mazow's
new anthology *The Woman Who Lost Her
Names* (Harper & Row). And tell your book-
store owner why.

—Esther Eisen

DOES "ENABLING" HELP WOMEN COPE WITH AGE?

Number Our Days by Barbara Myerhoff. E.P. Dutton (1978), \$12.95; paper, Touchstone (1980), \$4.95.

by Carol S. Holzberg

Number Our Days is a scholarly and sensitive investigation of about 300 aged Jews in Venice, California. It is an "ethnography," a descriptive and interpretive account of the significant cultural events, preoccupations, rituals, celebrations, and daily activities of the elderly (mid-eighties and up) members of the Aliyah Senior Citizens' Center.

Intending to spend only a year in research at the Center, Barbara Myerhoff, chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Southern California, worked with the members—interviewing, observing, participating, running errands and sharing their lives from 1973 to 1976. While helping them to record their own version of their history—a collective interpretation of the meaning of their lives—she captured living history and inscribed an entire generation of people in the Jewish "Book of Life."

Today only four thousand Jews remain out of the nearly 10,000 elderly East European Jews who began migrating to Venice for health or retirement reasons 30 years ago and lived in a thriving Jewish *shtetl* (townlet) that is no more. They are among the last authentic links to Ashkenazi cultural roots in the *shtetl* communities of turn-of-the-century Poland and Russia. Their *mamaloshen* (mother tongue) is Yiddish; their domestic or folk religion is *Yiddishkeit*—"the slowly grown, beloved result of long intimate relationships, not grand or exalted but associated with family nurturance and survival."

Underlying Myerhoff's analytic portrait, and even framing her investigation of the 50 or so individuals that she worked with most intensively, is a search for the meaningful symbols and metaphors that sustain, guide and determine the ordinary lives of the Center people.

The Center people demonstrate admirable qualities in their ability to handle the problems and crises associated with aging. Basha takes care of her sore feet by cutting and sewing a pair of cloth shoes; Nathan "had a story with a moral for every occasion"; Jacob was a "professional elder"; Sadie sang songs that she had written herself; all of them still found occasion to do *mitzvot* (good works). They have devised a coherent, intense, and vital life-style that establishes a meaningful continuity with their past life experiences and, Myerhoff notes, they age well.

Most probably their successful aging is due to their passion for continuity—"the individual's sense of unity as a single person (individual/biological continuity)" and the collective

sense of being "One People" (historical continuity). Their search for personal and collective continuities allows them to overcome the disruptions of their families that are the inevitable consequences of growing old in American society.

Myerhoff calls attention to the differential aging patterns of the men and the women. Through personal anecdotes, *bobbe-mysehs* ("old wives' tales") and interviews, she portrays how and why the women seem to manage better in old age than the men:

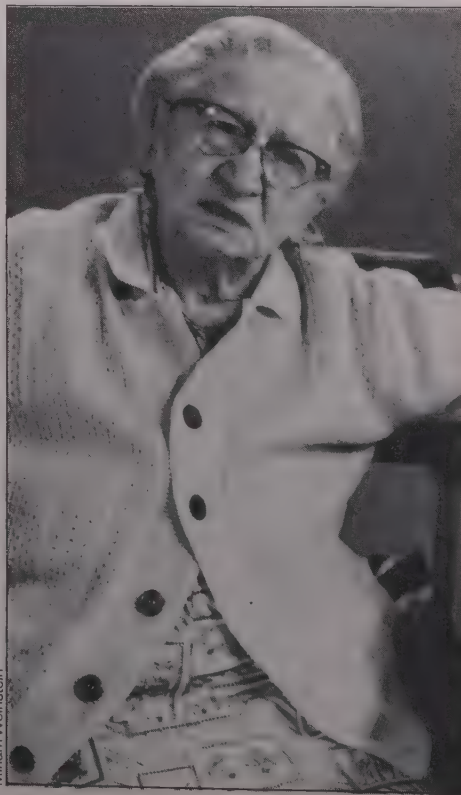
In nearly all circumstances, it seemed to me, the Center women as a group were the more capable, active and authoritative people. There were a number of remarkable and outstanding individual men, but it was clear that their personal characteristics accounted for their distinctiveness. Collectively, most of the men were quieter, vaguer, more sad than angry compared with the vitality and assertiveness of the women. The women effectively ran the Center on a day-by-day basis, and they dominated the community. They seemed, as well, to manage their private life more successfully.

What accounts for the greater success of the women? Myerhoff traces the roots of this phe-

nomenon to the role models of men and women in the *shtetl* communities of Eastern Europe. Religion was the dominant motif in the "Country," and men by virtue of their privileged relationship and responsibilities to assumed public superiority over women. The system was patriarchal and the women "extremely important, absolutely essential facilitators of the men's activities." In order to "facilitate," the women provided not only emotional nurturance within the home, but also the necessary material and financial supports by working "in the marketplace." *shtetl* women thus had a dual role, one "sketched by tradition—subservient, strained, homebound" and another, more realistic and more mundane, which revolved around their duties as *baleboste* (homemaker). This was "almost an underground role, generated not by design but out of practical necessities." Myerhoff asserts that it was this covert, "contingent" role of *baleboste* that gave women more options and flexibility than men, "more opportunity to express their individuality and adapt to their circumstances both in the New World and in old age."

Since the majority of the Center members are women, and the women generally tend to outlive the men, one wonders why Myerhoff portrays Center culture and its ideals mostly through the activities, insights and reflections of the men. Her key informant is Shmuel, a tailor, a man who is both a "critic and a philosopher." She continues to seek his advice and carry on discursive *pilpul* (argumentative debate) with him even after his death. Similarly, to demonstrate what she means by successful aging she describes Jacob Koved and the events surrounding his 95th birthday; to illustrate the collective identity of the members, "their interpretations of their worth, themselves and their values," she seizes upon the rise and fall of Reb Kominsky, the Center president who inspired rebellion because he "hoarded *mitzvahs*." Perhaps she derives a large part of Center culture from the men because they held all the positions of formal importance.

However, while the men invariably held the formal and ceremonial leadership positions, women in the Center functioned as the traditional leaders. Whereas men seemed to undergo an impaired sense of self worth and autonomy once they were forced to retire from the workplace, "a woman's work was never done." Even in old age, women were still called upon to perform their nurturant and expressive roles—to raise money for charity, prepare food for social events, and to rely on themselves through others. They still had a definite purpose in life.



Miriam Weinstein

it of Alice. By Evelyn Cowan. Taplinger \$8.95.

Portrait of Alice is the fictional realization of Elaine Bart's thesis on depression in middle-aged Jewish women (anthologized widely, appearing in *The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives*, Elizabeth Koltun, ed., Schocken, 1976). It could be read along with it, especially by women. Each work modifies the other and deepens our understanding of the "empty nest syndrome."

Alice B. Gazoont, 50, returns home after several months in a mental institution, having had a nervous breakdown following her eldest son's death in the Yom Kippur War. Her midlife existence is as meaningless as before—just before, Alice seeks to fill it with volunteer work. The passages on the Jewish women's volunteer groups are very real and therefore depressing and demonstrate well the counter-revolutionary role this kind of volunteer work plays as therapy for women who feel they no longer have a purpose in life.

While the novel's locale is suburban Glenside, the patterns of middle-class Anglo-Jewish life, the ingrown "organized Jewish community," the placebo of volunteer work, the striving for status—are the same as for women in Long Island, Denver or L.A., as is the plight of the women caught in the suburban trap.

Surprisingly, though, as a colleague pointed out, there is no American novel about a Jewish middle-aged woman like Alice. Middle-aged Jewish women in American novels are either marginally Jewish (if the authors are women) or the object of scorn and ridicule (if the authors are men). As of now, there is no novel that an intensely Jewish "midlife" American Jewish woman can read and see herself in, not a person, not a caricature.

Alice shows how the Jewish woman who has learned the rules, who stuck it out in a non-nurturing marriage—not expecting nurturing, on the contrary, dispensing it—who put her life into her children, is not being rewarded for her self-sacrifice but is suffering because of it when middle-age arrives. Alice is told to use her resources to help herself because she never learned to ask, "What do I have the honor to believe in the legitimacy of her needs. We keep hoping Alice will finally wake up together and leave her unresponsive husband and light out for Israel—her childhood home—but since this novel is true to life, she must stay. But she does survive. That, at least, is the ending.

—A.C.

Woman Who Lived in a Prologue, by Nina Baym. Houghton Mifflin, \$13.95. A woman feels her life is a "prologue" be-

cause she is constantly behaving in accordance with other people's expectations. Adriane Arkady contends with a difficult marriage, two unlucky love affairs, the disappearance of one son and the death of another, striving to act instead of being acted upon.

—Wendy Aron

Yesterday, by Miriam Shomer Zunker. Harper and Row, \$11.95. This memoir was originally published in 1939 and has been recently edited and reprinted by the author's granddaughter, Emily Wortis Lerder. Beginning her story with the marriage of her grandparents in the Russian town of Pinsk in 1834, Zunker describes the lives of selected members of their family. The women are often frustrated, despite their strength and intelligence. Zunker describes the lives of both accepting and rebellious women, and her narrative makes clear that the supportive wife and mother role of our foremothers was often forced upon them rather than freely chosen.

—Beryl Satter

A Time to Remember, by Marie Jastrow. W.W. Norton and Co., \$8.95. This memoir tells of one Jewish immigrant family's adjustment to life in New York City in the early years of the 20th century. Although the author writes very little about her personal or psychological growth, she does emphasize the lives of her parents and the problems they faced both with the outside world and with each other. Of particular interest is her account of the adjustments made by her mother, a traditional woman who finds it necessary to challenge her husband's beliefs on the proper activities of a wife. This memoir is a useful addition to our knowledge of the lives of first generation Jewish immigrant women in America.

—Beryl Satter

The Grand Dragon, by Irma Kurtz. E.P. Dutton, \$9.95. A fast-moving novel which searches for the significance of heritage in modern America. A sophisticated woman journalist who defines herself as "Jewish by birth" finds herself attracted to a Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan whom she has interviewed.

—Wendy Aron

The Story of Aunt Shlomzion, by Yoram Kaniuk. Harper and Row, \$10.95. A portrait, by a master Israeli storyteller, of a figure perceived to be similar in character to Shlomzion (Salome Alexandra) the Hasmonean queen who ruled ancient Judea. We are introduced by her

nephew to a woman of charm and mystery who inspires both awe and fear in her family and who struggles to remain proud of Judaic tradition in the face of changes demanded by modern-day Israel.

—Wendy Aron

Sobibor—Martyrdom and Revolt, by Miriam Novitch. Holocaust Library/Schocken (1980), paperback, \$4.95.

This is a collection of documents and testimonies about the infamous concentration camp, Sobibor. The book enables us to learn first-hand, from surviving prisoners themselves, the precise details of their deportation, experiences in the camp, and the revolt and escape. Eight of the testimonies are by women and all 30 provide important information.

Miriam Novitch, who put together this important collection, is a *chaverah* of Kibbutz Lochamei Hageta'ot (Ghetto Fighters Kibbutz) and works in its Museum. She has authored 10 other works on the Holocaust, in various languages, including *Spiritual Resistance: Art in Concentration Camps and Ghettos, 1940-1945* (in Italian and in English), about artists' work which she painstakingly discovered and unearthed and published as a personal mission after the war.

—A.C.



Miriam Novitch



IN MEMORIAM: ETHEL ROSENBERG

*After the years
wiping china clean
pouring coffee
from your breasts
in a flowered dress
typing at night
his letters
incantation at the typewriter
let me be
let me speak
let me be*

*Believing more
more than he
more than they
typing out
a vision of the world
no one would read
but yourself
and knowing the melody
singing your way
through orchards
of diapers*

*After all that
naturally
he went first
and you heard
the current coming
like the sound
of typewriter keys
like rain
you sang
incantation in the electric chair
and burned
like Joan
slowly, with your feet on the ground*

LOUISE BERNIKOW
copyright 1974

War Council

As a reporter, I was one of the few women present at the December 18, 1979 Conference on Halachic Process, the war council to defeat women's ordination in the Conservative movement. It was my intention to report objectively on the issue at hand. However, as a female Conservative Jew, I found myself emotionally involved with and indeed, humiliated by the events of the day. I felt as though I had crashed into a very private fraternity. Instead of signs saying "no Jews or dogs allowed," all of the signals said "no women allowed."

The venue was Terrace on the Park, a posh Queens restaurant/catering establishment replete with chrome, plastic foliage, mirrors, and thick carpeting. Some of the participants had flown in from the midwest, Canada and California. A large number were young rabbis, well under the age of 40.

The Conference was convened by the "traditionalist wing" of the Rabbinical Assembly in what seemed a desperate attempt to rally support for the defeat of the movement to ordain women as Conservative rabbis. Meeting at a time when the Senate of the Jewish Theological Seminary was about to vote on the issue, most of the group of Conservative rabbis of all ages appeared to be "running scared." The vehement opposition to ordination displayed by some participants seemed to border on paranoia.

The five senior members of the Seminary Talmud faculty—Professors David Weiss Halivni, Israel Francus, Dov Zlotnik, Jose Faur and Haim Zalman Dimitrovsky—presented papers. All were opposed to ordination of women, approaching the issue from different aspects of *halachah*.

I do not presume to argue the Talmudic content of the presen-

tations. What deeply disturbed me was the condescending attitude to women that pervaded the discussions. With few exceptions, there was no compassion for women's rights and feelings as equal human beings.

• Halivni said that if *all* women voluntarily take upon themselves the obligations of time-bound *mitzvot* for a full generation, then perhaps the issue of women's ordination could be approached halachically. He warned, however, that a woman who voluntarily takes upon herself the time-bound obligations of a man can change her mind.

He said, too, that those who would accept a woman as a rabbi, if her functions were limited, would not allow her to act as a *shaliach tzibur* (representative of the congregation). Since even a "cursory study reveals that officiating at a wedding is the "highest form of *shaliach tzibur*," he said, a female rabbi could not perform this function.

• Francus based his paper on the premise that women who voluntarily impose upon themselves the *mitzvot* from which they are exempted cannot be considered halachically equal with the men, who are *required* to perform these *mitzvot*. And one who votes for the ordination of women is "assisting transgressors."

• Zlotnik stated that "with *halachah*, no movement can claim it represents the mainstream of Judaism. No commission, no action of the Senate can change two millennia and make women rabbis acceptable to *Klal Israel* (the Jewish people).

• Faur said that "more important than the question of ordination of women is the issue of the halachic process. In Judaism, the law transcends human bureaucracy and protects us."

• Dimitrovsky said he belie-

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parated from the function
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ages and divorces, areas
alachically permitted for
en.

er hearing the position
rs, the conference almost
imously passed this resolu-

ereas the decision on the
ation of women by the
ary must be made in
onance with halachic pro-
and whereas the major
chists of the Talmud faculty
e Jewish Theological Semi-
have presented their
chic positions on the ques-
of the ordination of women
whereas the weight of these
entations is overwhelmingly
position to the ordination
omen at this time.

it resolved that we, more
200 members of the Rabbi-
Assembly assembled at
Conference on Halachic
ess express our opposition
e ordination of women by
Jewish Theological Semi-
at this time.

the end of the conference,
David Feldman, one of the
co-chairmen, came over to
and said that he hoped my
icipation had shed some
on the issue for me, and
now understood why
en should not be ordained.
never particularly taken a
d on the issue and I had
onally been relatively satis-
with the status quo, I said.
ever, after having been
ected to eight hours of
sitivity to my feelings as a
an being who happens to be
le, I now understood why
en must be ordained. I had
among my own people but
elt like a Jew at a restrict-
ountry club. Because of the
s of this day, I had meta-
hosed into a militantly
e Jewish feminist.

elle Saidel Wolk 1980

Call for Correspondents

TH continues to accept applica-
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SHELTER FOR JEWISH BATTERED WOMEN

FAR ROCKAWAY, NY—The Hart-
man YM-YWHA here has estab-
lished a battered women's shel-
ter, the first facility of its kind
under the auspices of a Jewish
institution

Starting funds for the shelter
have been provided by the New
York State Department of Social
Services. Subsequently, it will be
funded by the Human Resources
Administration of the New York
City Welfare Department.

It is almost impossible to esti-
mate the number of battered
Jewish women due to the ab-
sence of statistical information
on ethnic groups in U.S. census
records and the fact that Jewish
agencies have not provided ser-
vices to these women in the
past.

Rabbis and other Jewish com-
munity leaders responding to a
questionnaire sent out by the
Hartman Y Shelter Advisory
Committee all denied that wife
abuse was a serious problem.
Yet when they were informed
that kosher facilities would be
available at the Shelter, all—
without exception—said they
did know of battered women
and would make referrals.

Thelma Peskin Halpern, a doc-
toral student at Yeshiva Univer-
sity's Wurzweiler School of Social
Work, has been active in bring-

ing the problem of wife abuse to
the attention of Jewish leaders.
Halpern's research revealed that
Jewish women, particularly
those within the Orthodox com-
munity, are often the least likely
to seek assistance. The Jewish
woman, Halpern noted, derives
much of her identity from her
role as wife and mother, and the
religious tradition emphasizes
the sanctity of marriage. Often,
the Jewish woman suffers bru-
tally for many years before con-
fiding in others or seeking help.
Shame, fear, guilt, economic de-
pendence and love for her chil-
dren also keep her locked into
this web of violence.

"Battering among the Ortho-
dox is probably more hidden
than in other groups," said Bar-
bara Harris, case work super-
visor for the Hartman Y's do-
mestic violence program, and di-
rector of clinical services for
battered women and their fami-
lies.

Harris has discovered that
battered Orthodox women are
particularly reluctant to leave
their homes and "stable family
structures" because this repre-
sents too much of a break with
tradition. Moreover, their rabbis
usually advise them not to leave
but to try and work things out
instead.

Those expected to make use
of the Hartman Shelter range in

age from 18 to 60 and represent
all classes and ethnic groups
from all boroughs, although
most will be from low-income
families. In recent years, said
Harris, there has been a rise in
the number of upper class vic-
tims seeking help. In the past,
she noted, middle and upper
class women tended to rely on
relatives for financial and emo-
tional support if they felt threat-
ened at home. With the growing
public awareness of the prob-
lems women encounter, many
have realized that there is no
shame in admitting that they
need help.

The Hartman Shelter is
equipped with ten apartments,
including two with kosher
kitchens for use by Orthodox
women. The facility will be able
to accommodate 30 women and
children at a time, and 150-200
women and children each year.
Qualified personnel will provide
crisis intervention, counseling,
child care and career guidance,
enabling women to go on to
lead independent lives.

"Abused Jewish women
should feel free to contact the
Y," Harris said. "The location of
the Shelter will not be publicized
for their protection, and we are
here for them."

**Based on reports by Thelma
Peskin Halpern and Cindy Kaye.**

LEADERS FEEL POWERLESS

LOS ANGELES—Two-thirds of
the female professionals and
one-third of the volunteer lead-
ers in 35 Jewish communal
service agencies here said they
did not feel part of the power
structure either of their own
organizations or of the larger Jewish
community.

This emerged from a survey
questionnaire distributed and
later evaluated at a meeting of
70 top level women leaders
organized by the Hebrew Union
College School of Jewish Com-
munal Service and the Los
Angeles section of the National
Council of Jewish Women in
December.

Entitled "For Women Only,"
the day-long meeting was called
to evaluate the position of
women in American Jewish
organizations. It constituted the
second phase of a three-year
program, "The Creative Partner-
ship," developed by HUC to
explore the relationship between
volunteers and professionals in
the Jewish community.

There was general agreement

among the conference partici-
pants that the large Jewish
women's membership organiza-
tions—such as Hadassah, the
National Council of Jewish
Women, Women's American
ORT and B'nai B'rith Women—
have more power and prestige in
the secular community than
they do in the Jewish world,
where the male establishment
tends to diminish their value. As
a result, creative Jewish women
are increasingly being drawn to
secular organizations, the job
market, and, to a lesser extent,
"alternative" Jewish groups.

Women members of the local
Jewish Federation Board said at
the meeting that their access to
positions of power was limited
by the extent to which they
could make large contributions
from their own earnings. Even
those who raised large sums did
not believe that their efforts
were rewarded equally with
those of the "big givers."

Volunteers who were "only
housewives" said they felt
unworthy of seeking major
leadership positions on pre-

dominantly male boards. When
these women did achieve a
place in the "smoke-filled
rooms," they were amazed, they
said, to find that their abilities
were equal to, and often sur-
passed, those of the men.

"The American Jewish com-
munity is not an equal oppor-
tunity employer," declared Ann
Wolfe, recently retired Social
Welfare Consultant for the
American Jewish Committee
and National Staff Director of
the AJC's Committee on the
Role of Women. While the direc-
tors of Jewish agencies profess
concern over the survival of the
Jewish family, they are dragging
their heels in developing a
program that would enable
women to be productively em-
ployed while still participating in
family life, she said at the meet-
ing.

Esther Landau, former Presi-
dent of the National Council of
Jewish Women, pointed out that
women working in volunteer
organizations face obstacles
similar to those encountered by
women in the paid labor force

where, according to current figures, they constitute 66% of the line workers but only 8% of the executives.

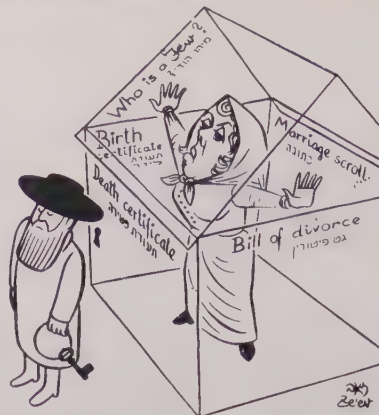
Toward the end of the conference, small groups met to begin planning an agenda for change. One proposal called for a women's strike against Jewish agencies to focus attention on hiring and promotion practices for women. Women were also urged to demand affirmative action in filling lay and professional positions; formulate plans for the establishment of day care programs for workers in the Jewish community; and insist on flex-time or job sharing. An ongoing network of professional and lay women was established to follow through on the recommendations discussed at the conference.

Marcia Spiegel
Rita Lowenthal

"STUDY," ORTHODOX WOMEN TOLD

TEANECK, NJ—A conference entitled, "Jewish Woman: Tradition Faces the Eighties," brought together some 90 traditionalist women concerned about the status of women in Jewish law. The April conference—the first of its kind—was sponsored by the Teaneck Task Force on Jewish Women and the Jewish Chaplain's office at Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Dr. Ze'ev Falk, Professor of Family and Succession Law at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and presently a Visiting Professor at the New York University School of Law, told conference participants that women can only gain full equality if they assume obligations presently incumbent only upon men, particularly the study of Torah. He said:



"I'm sure that once Torah is studied not only by men but in dialogue between men and women, many things will appear in a different light. This will reflect on the interpretation of Torah to rectify the injustice which has been going on for so long." Falk also suggested that women put on *tefillin* (phylacteries) as a visible symbol of their full participation in religious life. He encouraged women to press for

movement in Jewish law:

"We simply cannot afford to lose 50 per-cent of our potential. . . . Whatever has been achieved, has been achieved only by those who have been willing to make sacrifices."

Rabbi Marc Angel of Congregation Shearith Israel dealt with the question of whether the *halachah* (Jewish Law) can, in fact, accommodate a movement towards the equality of women in Judaism. Relying upon Maimonides' understanding of *halachah* and halachic process, he stated that a renewal of Jewish law was possible and could promote women's participation in Jewish religious life. He felt that the major obstacle facing the women's movement in Judaism was not *halachah*, but the fear of change.

Miriam Chernick

FIRST KOSHER DAY-CARE CENTER

TORONTO—The first full time year-round kosher Jewish day care center, "Gan Yiladim," has opened here after two years of planning.

Designed to serve the needs of Jewish families in the city's north end, the center was founded in response to a 1975 survey conducted by the National Council of Jewish Women which showed that 81 percent of the respondents were interested in day care with Jewish content, and that more than half wanted such a center to be kosher.

The center is housed in two classrooms leased from Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, staffed by three full-time licensed child-care workers and several volunteers, and can accommodate 34 children. The cost per child, aged two to five, is \$60 a week, which includes a hot dairy lunch and two snacks daily.

Dorothy Lipovenko, a Toronto journalist and a member of the day-care center organizing committee, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Gan Yiladim is designed to provide a "stimulating environment and enable the children to learn through direct experience." The center closes early on Shabbat and is closed on Jewish holidays. Children recite prayers before each meal and learn basic Hebrew vocabulary.

Despite many appeals for funds, Gan Yiladim has not received any financial support from the organized Jewish community. "There is some kind of prevailing myth that Jewish mothers do not go out to work," said Dorothy Lipovenko. "But as the [NCJW] report proves, they do. And it is crucial for Jewish children who have to use day care that they be placed in a stable family-like environment with their peers."

ISRAELI FEMINISTS TELL IT LIKE IT IS

BROOKLYN, NY—Israel's constant state of war has had a significant impact upon male-female relationships. The ever-present fear that husbands, sons and brothers might be killed in battle often creates "demanding, dependent husbands and wives who are nervous wrecks."

This assessment was made by Ruth Rasnick, founder of the battered women's shelter in Herzliya, at the First National Conference on Women in Israel, held here in April. The conference, attended by about 200 women, was organized by a group of feminist Zionists.

The Israeli women who addressed the gathering declared that they are no longer willing to accept the argument that women's issues must wait until "more pressing problems" are resolved. They demand that their needs be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. "To say there is a wrong time to criticize is (to cast) a vote of non-confidence in Israel," journalist Yoella Har-Shefi, author of *Beyond the Gunsights*, said. "Israel must not put up with anything that opposes women's rights as human beings."

Rachel Ostrovitz of the Israeli Women's Movement of Tel Aviv reported that "women's salaries are 41% less than those of men. Fewer than 10% of managerial jobs are in the hands of women . . . only 9% of Knesset members are women. There are no women in the government and there are no women mayors."

Beyond the political reality of the discrimination suffered by women in the area of personal law (particularly marriage and divorce), which Lesley Hazelton, author of *Israeli Women: The Reality Behind The Myth*, discussed.

Participants reported that the women's movement in Israel is growing slowly but steadily. Feminist-sponsored programs, which are staffed by volunteers, include two shelters for battered women (an estimated 50,000 women are battered in Israel), two centers for aid to rape victims and two centers providing legal aid, self-help courses and literature dealing with women.

Conference participants formed the "Coalition for Women in Israel," which will launch educational outreach projects within the United States and develop a support system for new female immigrants to Israel who wish to make connections with Israeli activists. The coalition will be organized as a network of local *chugot nashim* (women's groups) dedicated to consciousness-raising, education, lobbying within the Zionist movement to raise the priority of women's issues, fund-raising and activism on the part of Israeli women. The organization will publish a newsletter, bring Israeli feminists to the U.S. on national speaking tours, and develop educational materials dealing with the lives of Israeli women.

Reported by Ellen Sharon Bo
for JSPS.

A JEWISH WOMEN'S HAGADA

By popular demand, *LILITH* is making available copies of this feminist hagada by Aviva Cantor, which can be used alone or with other hagadas. Passover is not as far off as you think and copies are limited so order now at \$5 each (which includes 3rd class postage). Outside US and Canada, add \$2. Special bulk rates also available.

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ISH HEROINES "DEFAMED"

WINNIPEG—Some 50 Jewish women of diverse age groups participated in a day-long symposium on the changing role of the Jewish woman here in November. The symposium was sponsored by the YMHA Community Centre, the National Council of Jewish Women, and the University of Manitoba Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies.

Sheva Zucker, instructor of Jewish language and literature at the University of Manitoba, gave a historical perspective of the role of women in Judaism, beginning with an analysis of "Woman of Valor" (Proverbs 31) as strong, resourceful, even entrepreneurial, but lacking equal opportunities to study. She pointed to the "heroines of Jewish history" such as Sarah, Esther and Beruriah as being seen "totally scorned and defamed" by Biblical commentators and myth-makers. Sarah, for example, the prophetess and judge, in later Jewish lore was described as grossly arrogant and haughty. The chutzpah lay in summoning the commander of the Jewish forces in time of national crisis.

Chelle Namak

ORT VS. ANTI-TECHNICAL BIAS

BOSTON—ORT technical schools in India, Latin America and Israel are making special efforts to attract more young women to their programs. While all school courses are open to women, it is often difficult to recruit them due to cultural biases against women working in particular fields.

This was revealed in interviews conducted with ORT directors attending the 25th Biennial Convention of Women's American ORT here last October.

Joseph Guedj, Director of ORT India, described how his wife spent five days traveling to backwater villages to recruit students for the separate ORT girls' school in Bombay. Asked why the school trained women for traditionally female fields such as secretarial studies and hair-dressing, he replied that, "these are the highest paying professions for women in India today."

Bernard Wand-Polak, Director of ORT in Latin America, also stressed the problem of getting girls to attend ORT schools. "Girls in Latin America aren't pushing hard for vocational education," he said. "Technical training for women is not the tradition. In Argentina, less than

20% of our students are women. In Brazil, where there is greater equality between men and women, we have something over 20%."

Both Wand-Polak and Joseph Harmatz, former director of ORT Israel, strongly believe that co-education is necessary. Harmatz regretted that only 30% of the ORT Israel student population are women and that there are still some separate girls' schools in Israel. "Years ago, vocational skills were divided according to skills," he said, "and different skills were taught to young men and women. All the new schools are integrated but some segregated older schools remain because it's often impractical or impossible to re-equip existing facilities." He continued:

"Israel is short of technical manpower [sic] and we want women to shift from traditional occupations to technological ones. The fields of computer science, engineering, optics and micro-electronics are all attractive women today."

At the panel session entitled "Woman's Position in Modern Society: Tradition vs. Change," Blu Greenberg, a member of the theology faculty of the Institute for Women Today said that volunteerism should not be downgraded; rather, it should be presented as "an example to children of the desire to give of oneself to a higher ideal. Working women shouldn't use work as an excuse for opting out of volunteerism. As we feel the pull in two directions we should never relinquish the traditional values but should interweave both."

One delegate in the audience commented, "My husband doesn't understand why my involvement with ORT is so important to me. Women in volunteer organizations should no longer have to hear their work referred to as 'Mommy's hobby.'"

Panelist Mary Gendler, writer and family counselor, spoke of the need to challenge sexist traditions in Judaism. "The only Jews able to receive the Covenant are men," she declared. "Women can only participate in it by marrying a man or giving birth to one." She noted that the creation of new rituals, such as a ceremony equivalent to the *b'rith* on the birth of a daughter and the revival of *Rosh Chodesh* (new moon) as a woman's holiday have paved the way for greater equality between the sexes in Judaism.

Carol Rivers, Professor of Journalism at Boston University, traced women's fear of success to their pre-adolescent years, when many become convinced that success leads to unpopularity.

Beverly Scott

NO LONGER AMONG US

Golda Kukier (November 1, 1979), age 73. Kukier was the first woman elected to the executive board of the Asociación Mutual Argentina, and also represented the Bund in the cultural department of the AMIA. She is best known for her work on behalf of the Y.L. Peretz Yiddish School.

Tillie Mehler (November 3, 1979), age 83. Mehler was a founder of the Passover Relief Fund. In 1918, she became the first secretary of the Israel Aid Society. Throughout her life, she also contributed to such organizations as the American Mizrahi Women, United Ladies Aid Society and the Nashim Rachmanios Society.

Rachel Yanait Ben-Zvi (November 16, 1979), age 93. Ben-Zvi was the founder of the Women's Labor Movement in Israel and among the founders of the Pioneer Women of America.

Born in a small town in the Ukraine, Ben-Zvi helped found Jewish labor unions and self-defense groups in response to the pogroms that followed the abortive 1905 revolution in Russia.

Having emigrated to Eretz Israel in 1908, she became active in the developing Labor movement, helping to publish the first Hebrew socialist periodical, *Achdut* ("Unity"). She was among the founders of Israel's second Hebrew high school and was one of the leading activists in the *Hashomer* (self-defense) organization.

In 1920, two years after her marriage to Yitzhak Ben-Zvi (who later served as Israel's president), she founded an agricultural school to train young women for work on the country's new agricultural settlements. She was a firm believer in the equality of Jewish women in the synagogue and in all aspects of Israeli society.

Hanna Rovina (February 2), age 91, a founder of and leading actress in the Habimah Theater of Israel. Rovina was one of the founders of the Habimah Theater in Moscow in 1917. At 33, she made her mark in the history of drama as Leah in Habimah's production of Sh. Anski's *The Dybbuk*. For nine years, the Habimah troupe in Moscow continued to perform *The Dybbuk*

URDER IN ARGENTINA

GENEVA—Luis and Helena Haimovitz, an elderly Jewish couple, were told here in June that their daughter, Alexandra, died after being tortured in a prison in Argentina.

Alexandra Haimovitz, a high school student, was arrested in Cordoba in 1976 and has not been heard from since. She was a member of the "Youth for Guevara" movement which supported the late Latin American radical leader, Che Guevara. According to her parents, she and a boyfriend were picked up by police several days before she was to leave for Israel to join two older brothers who settled there.

The Haimovitz's received a letter from Amnesty International stating that a young Argentinian woman, Gratiela Mauna, had been in prison with Alexandra and reported that she died after being tortured. Mauna escaped and is now in Geneva.

Chauna told the Haimovitz's that Alexandra was given worse treatment than the others in prison because she was Jewish and that in Argentine prison

camps it was much worse to be Jewish than to be a terrorist.

At least 15,000 persons have disappeared in Argentina since the military junta seized power there in 1976, many of them Jews. Those not heard from after a year are generally presumed to be dead. Numerous bodies have been washed ashore in Argentina during the last four years with heads and limbs severed to prevent identification.

The Haimovitz's, who immigrated to Israel from Argentina several years ago and now live in Rehovot, came to Geneva to seek information about their daughter from officials of the United Nations Human Rights Commission which has a special committee that investigates cases of missing persons. They plan to go to London to see officials of Amnesty International. Before leaving Geneva, they told reporters:

"Nothing will bring back our daughter, but let the Argentinian government at least acknowledge they killed our daughter. We want our daughter's body back at least to be able to bury her in Israel." (JTA)

Tamar Levy

and added other Jewish classics to their repertoire until they reached a point where a Hebrew language theatre committed to Zionism faced insurmountable problems in Communist Russia.

In 1926, Rovina and other members of Habimah—Aharon Meskin and Zvi Friedland—insisted that the ensemble move to Palestine to fulfill the vision of a Hebrew theater. In 1928, Rovina and other members of Habimah sailed to Palestine and eventually settled in Tel Aviv.

Rovina was given the title "Queen of the Theatre" in 1929. She performed over 68 roles in the course of her career.

Anna Ticho (March 1), age 86. Jerusalem artist. Born in Vienna, she arrived in Jerusalem in 1914. Many of her paintings were devoted to the city of Jerusalem and the Judean Mountains. She painted landscapes entirely from memory and imagination—hills, rocks and

terraces, glimpses of tombs and Arab villages. Ticho was awarded this year's Israel Prize and had two exhibitions at the Israel Museum.

Sophie Ruskay (May 5), age 95. Author of *Horsecars and Cobblestones* about her childhood in Montreal.

Ida Kaminska (May 21), age 80. Kaminska was a leading performer in the classical Yiddish theater for more than 60 years and founder of the Jewish National Theater of Poland.

Born in 1899 in Odessa, she came from a theatrical family. Her mother, Esther Rachel Kaminska, was known as the "mother of the Yiddish stage." Her father, Avram Izhak Kaminska, founded the Yiddish Theater in Moscow and had his own company.

With her first husband, Zygmunt Turkow (whom she later divorced), she established the Warsaw Yiddish Art Theater which performed

cont'd on p. 47

MURIEL RUKEYSER

DEC. 15, 1913—FEB. 12, 1980

Muriel Rukeyser struggled all her life "To find the burning word/ To learn to speak. . . ." Even as a young girl she had already realized that the medium of her creativity, hard as it was for her, was to be the words of her poems. "I know what I want in my words/ But it will not turn into song/ And it's not worth the listening." ("The Word Fisher")

Breaking Open describes her agony with the words and how she had come to break open from silence to speech. "Mother, because you never spoke to me/ I go my life, do I, searching in women's faces/ the lost word, a word in the shape of a breast?/ . . . I come from that, but I come far, to touch the word." ("More Clues")

All her life Rukeyser wrote poems concerned with a wide range of social issues—imprisoned poets, injustice, poverty, the Spanish Civil War and Vietnam. Even an erotic poem like "Yes, We Were Looking at Each Other" is fused with a commitment regarding the outside world. War and its horrors is the theme of such memorable poems as "What Have you Brought Home from the Wars?" and "Endless."

"I lived in the first century of world wars/ Most mornings I

would be more or less insane/ . . . Slowly I would get to pen and paper,/ Make my poems for others unseen and unborn." ("Poem")

That she was a poet also conscious of her Jewishness is reflected in her poems "To be a Jew in the 20th Century," "Miriam: The Red Sea," "For My Son," and the truly astounding "Akiba." Her poem "Ms. Lot" appeared in LILITH's premiere issue.

In other poems she rewrites several legends and myths from a feminist perspective. In the witty "Myth," she explains the source of Oedipus' eventual punishment. Oedipus, protesting to the Sphinx, says, "When you say man. . . you include women/ too. Everyone knows that." And says, "That's what/ you think."

In Miriam: "The Red Sea," Miriam the prophetess becomes Miriam the lonely woman poet—"My unseen brothers have gone over/ chariots/ deep seas under/ I stand alone here/ ankle deep/ And I sing, I sing, until the lands/ sing to each other."

Rukeyser's mother once told her that she was descended from Rabbi Akiba. She felt that to be a great gift. American Jewish women poets are descended from Muriel Rukeyser. That, too is a great gift.

Diane Levenberg

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☐ bookstore
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☐ other _____

What did you read first in this issue?

What article in this issue is your favorite?

If you've read other issues, which articles were most memorable?

What 3 magazines do you read regularly?

About how many of these did you buy last year?

- books _____
records _____
greeting cards _____
Rosh Hashanah cards _____
children's books _____
toys _____

Are you a member of a book club? ____ yes ____ no

If yes, which one(s)? _____

Do you belong to any Jewish organization?

____ yes ____ no

If yes, which one(s)? _____

Offices held: _____

Member of a synagogue or temple? ____ yes ____ no

If yes, is it

- ☐ Orthodox
☐ Conservative
☐ Reform
☐ Reconstructionist
☐ chavurah
☐ Chassidic
☐ other _____

Do women and men participate equally?

____ yes ____ no

Have you ever (check whichever apply)

- ☐ had an *aliyah* to the Torah
☐ carried the Torah
☐ been counted in a *minyan*
☐ had a Bat/Bar Mitzvah

Did you receive a Jewish education?

____ yes ____ no

If yes, was it

- ☐ Bat/Bar Mitzvah
☐ Sunday school through grade _____
☐ afternoon school through grade _____
☐ Yiddishe schule through grade _____
☐ Jewish day school through grade _____
☐ ulpan
☐ college or graduate study (specify) _____
☐ adult education (specify) _____

Currently involved in Jewish study?

____ yes ____ no

If yes, please specify (formal, informal, etc.) _____

Is your home

- ☐ kosher
☐ vegetarian
☐ not kosher but buy "Jewish" foods

21 In the past three years have you bought any

- ☐ matza
☐ gefilte fish
☐ kosher delicatessen
☐ borscht
☐ felafel, houmous or techina
☐ Sabbath or Chanukah candles
☐ boxed candy

22 Do you have any of the following at home

- ☐ wine
☐ liqueur
☐ scotch
☐ vodka
☐ gin
☐ rum
☐ blended whiskey
☐ bottled water

23 How often last month did you have guests in your home? ____ times

24 How many times last month did you eat out? ____ times

25 Did you eat take-out food last month? ____ times

26 Do you smoke cigarettes? ____ yes ____ no

If yes, how many packages/week _____

Which brand? _____

27 Do others in your household smoke cigarettes?

____ yes ____ no. If yes, ____ packages/week.

Brand _____

28 Do you have any of these in your home

- ☐ lipstick
☐ eye makeup
☐ face makeup
☐ scent
☐ other cosmetics _____

29 Do you have in your home

- ☐ mezuzah(s)
☐ Sabbath candlesticks
☐ Chanukah menorah
☐ hagadda(s)
☐ kiddush cup
☐ seder plate
☐ Jewish needlework
☐ Hebrew calligraphy
☐ Israeli jewelry
☐ Jewish or Israeli ceramics/glasswork
☐ artwork on Jewish themes

30 Where do you live

- ☐ house you own
☐ rented house
☐ rented apartment
☐ dormitory
☐ coop or condominium
☐ commune
☐ retirement village
☐ singles complex
☐ nursing home
☐ other _____

31 Name of your city/town _____

32 How many adults in your household _____

33 What are their ages? _____

34 Does your household include pets? ____ yes ____ no

35 If yes, how many

- dogs _____
cats _____
birds _____
guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils _____
fish _____
other _____

36 Do you own a car? ____ yes ____ no

37 If yes, what make and year? _____

38 Any other cars in your household? ____ yes ____ no

Please use this space for
additional comments.

Please turn the page

Please use this space for additional comments.

- 39 If yes, what make(s) and year(s)? _____
- 40 Have you rented a car in the past 5 years?
____yes ____no. If yes, how many times _____
- 41 Do you participate in
☐ tennis
☐ golf
☐ ping-pong
☐ swimming
☐ dancing
☐ hiking/camping
☐ running/calisthenics
☐ body-building
☐ martial arts/self-defense
☐ sailing/boating/canoeing
☐ hang-gliding/sky-diving
☐ horseback riding
☐ fencing/archery
☐ soccer/softball/volleyball/basketball
☐ other (have we left anything out?) _____
- 42 Did you take a vacation last year? ____yes ____no
- 43 How many have you taken in the past 5 years in
 U.S. _____
 Canada _____
 Israel _____
 Europe _____
 Caribbean _____
 other _____
- 44 Did you travel by
☐ plane
☐ boat
☐ car
☐ train
☐ bus
☐ bicycle
- 45 Any business trips last year? ____yes ____no
- 46 If yes, how many _____. Mode of transport _____
- 47 Do you have a valid passport? ____yes ____no
- 48 If you travelled in Israel in the past 5 years did you stay in a
☐ hotel
☐ kibbutz or kibbutz guest house
☐ ulpan
☐ hostel, campsite, dormitory
☐ pension
☐ other _____
- 49 Any education programs in Israel?
____yes ____no. If yes, please specify _____
- 50 Do you (circle whichever apply)
 speak/read/write Hebrew
 speak/read/write Yiddish
 speak/read/write Ladino
- 51 Do you have a child/children?
____yes ____no. If yes, how many and what ages? _____
- 52 How many children live in your household? _____
- 53 Have your children participated in education programs in Israel? ____yes ____no. If yes, please specify _____
- 54 Are any of your children (specify how many) in
☐ day care _____
☐ Jewish day care _____
☐ Jewish day school _____
☐ Jewish afternoon school _____
☐ Sunday school _____
☐ Yiddish schule _____
☐ Jewish / Zionist youth movement _____
- 55 Are you satisfied with their Jewish education?
____yes ____no. Comments _____

- 56 Are you satisfied with their textbooks?
____yes ____no. Comments _____
- 57 Did any of them attend Jewish camp (s)?
____yes ____no. If yes, which one(s)? _____
- 58 Do you feel this was a positive experience?
____yes ____no. Comments _____
- 59 What was the last grade of school you completed?
☐ grade 8
☐ 1-3 years high school
☐ high school graduate
☐ 1-3 years college
☐ college graduate
☐ graduate study
☐ advanced degrees (specify) _____
- 60 What is your current occupation?
- 61 Is it (check whichever apply)
☐ salaried
☐ unsalaried
☐ full-time
☐ part-time
☐ free-lance
☐ self-employed
☐ currently unemployed
- 62 Where were you born (city, country)? _____
- 63 Where were your parents born?
 mother _____ father _____
- 64 What is your own pre-tax annual income?
☐ under \$5,000
☐ \$5,000-9,000
☐ \$10,000-14,999
☐ \$15,000-24,999
☐ \$25,000-49,999
☐ \$50,000 and over
- 65 What is your household's pre-tax income / yr?
☐ under \$10,000
☐ \$10,000-\$14,999
☐ \$15,000-24,999
☐ \$25,000-49,999
☐ \$50,000 and over
- 66 Do you have a life-insurance policy?
____yes ____no
- 67 What charities do you support? _____
- 68 Please estimate total you gave last year: _____
- 69 Are you
☐ single
☐ married
☐ widow(er)ed
☐ separated/divorced
☐ other _____
- 70 If married, is your spouse
☐ Jewish
☐ non-Jewish
☐ convert to Judaism
☐ non-Jewish but raising children Jewish
- 71 Are you ☐ Jewish ☐ non-Jewish
- 72 Are you ☐ female ☐ male
- 73 How old are you? ____ years
- 74 How many people read your issue of LILITH _____
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931. When the Nazis invaded
d, she and her family fled to
t Central Asia. Although Ida
llowed to return to Poland
the war, her daughter, Ruth,
mprisoned for several years
e the family was reunited in
d, where the government
d Kaminska establish her

theater.

She fled Poland for the U.S. in
1968 in the wake of the anti-
Semitism following the Six-Day
War. Kaminska and her husband,
Mariàn Melman, who died last year,
tried unsuccessfully to start a
Yiddish theater in Israel and in NY.

She was best known outside the
Yiddish stage for her performance
in the 1966 Czechoslovak film, "The
Shop on Main Street," where she
played an old Jewish shopkeeper
forced out of her store by the Nazis.
Her autobiography, *My Life, My
Theater*, was published in 1973.

The University of Haifa has sched-
uled an International Interdisci-
plinary Congress on Women for
12/28/81-1/1/82 on the theme
"Women's Worlds—the New Schol-
arship." Details from: The Secre-
tariat, IICW, 122 Hayarkon St. POB
3054, Tel Aviv.

EL TOV ined as Rabbis

Hebrew Union College-Jewish
ute of Religion (Reform move-
ordained the following seven
en as rabbis this June:

Wallin Berk (Encino, CA);
Felix (Highland Park, IL);
Friedman (Marblehead, MA);
a Hachen (Cleveland Heights,
Ellen Jay Lewis (Westfield, NJ);
h Lewis (Rochester, NY); and
y Portnoy of New Haven, CT.

Friedman became Canada's
woman rabbi upon assuming
osition of Assistant Rabbi of
oly Blossom Temple in Toron-
is brings the number of
en rabbis ordained by the
m movement to 22. The
er of Reconstructionist wom-
bbis ordained is six, none this
(JTA)

onnie J. Koppell of Brook-
as become the first Jewish
an accepted as a chaplain
idate by the United States

ourth-year student at the
nstructionist Rabbinical
one in Philadelphia, Koppell
ge of three women and
men who participated in a
eek Officers' Course which
s clergy to become army
lains. She now holds the
of second lieutenant in the
Reserves.
a telephone interview, Kop-
escribed her future role as

that of providing emotional sup-
port to Jewish servicepeople
and their families. "I would
work with a small population of
approximately 24 people in a
unit. The extensive duties of
officers create pressures for
them and their families, and I
would offer counseling services
for the entire family. In addition,
I would provide Jewish educa-
tion for the children."

Cindy Kaye

In the Community

Yael Vered, appointed Israel's
Ambassador to UNESCO.

Isabella Meltz, Lilit Correspondent
in Toronto, appointed Assistant
Executive Director of the Canadian
Zionist Federation Central Region.

Ruth Frank, Director of Jewish
Book Council.

Rose Movitch of Trenton, NJ,
elected president of the Jewish
Federation of Greater Trenton.

Jane Evans of New Rochelle, NY,
elected president of the Jewish
Braille Institute of America.

Shirley Lavine of New York,

*The next issue of LILITH (#8) will
feature articles on the choices and
changes women have made in their
lives in order to live as Jewish femi-
nists. We are interested in seeing
articles dealing with current conflicts
and/or creative solutions. Please
send submissions to The Ways We
Are, LILITH, 250 West 57 St., NYC
10019.*

appointed chairperson of the Urban
Affairs Foundation of the United
Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh.
Lottie Bernholtz, elected President
of the Windsor Jewish Community
Council.

Marjorie Blankstein of Winnipeg,
elected President of the Winnipeg
Jewish Community Council.

Sylvia Brailove of Union, NJ, in-
stalled for her second term as pre-
sident of the Jewish Federation of
Central New Jersey.

Cindy Chazan of Toronto, appoint-
ed director of the Koffler Centre of
the Arts.

Judith Roman Eichner, appointed
National Director of Public Rela-
tions, Jewish War Veterans.

Sylvia Hassenfeld of Providence,
RI, appointed to the Board of Direc-
tors of the Jewish Telegraphic
Agency.

Enid Hildebrand of Toronto, elected
co-chairperson, United Jewish
Appeal Lawyers Division.

Billie Tisch, president of the Federa-
tion of Jewish Philanthropies of
Greater New York, the first woman
to hold this post.

Julia E. Desgun, appointed Execu-
tive Director of the New York Asso-
ciation for New Americans.

Awards

Dr. Rita-Levi Montalcini, a 70-year-
old biologist, received Italy's Saint
Vincent Prize for Medicine for her
work in cancer research.

Dr. Rachel Wischnitzer, the 95-year-
old art historian, received the
Golden Aleph Award from the
Yeshiva University Museum for her
outstanding scholarly contribu-
tions to Jewish art.

Meryl Streep received the Academy
Award as Best Supporting Actress
for her role in "Kramer vs. Kramer."
Streep comes from a Jewish family
of long-time Amsterdam diamond
merchants.

**Compiled by Adena Berkowitz and
Cindy Kaye**

Credits

inside front cover — "Victim," oil on paper and
"Victims," ink on canvas. From "Holocaust,"
exhibition of artist's work at the Cathedral of St.
John the Divine in New York.
page 11 — This article appeared in the Fall, 1978
issue of *Cross Currents* magazine, and is
reprinted with permission.
pages 14 and 15 — Masks by sculptor Suzanne
Benton, for her performances of "Tales of
Women of Myth and Heritage."
page 23 — Originally an address to the First
National Women's Studies Association meeting,
this article appeared in somewhat different form
in *Frontiers*, Spring, 1980.
pages 24 to 25 — This comic strip appeared in
slightly different form in *Corporate Crime* comics
(Educomics).
page 29 — "New Lights and Old Shadows":
charcoal drawing by Lionell Reiss by kind
permission of the artist.
page 31 — "Terrace," painting by Ariane Berman.
page 37 — "Warsaw in Flames," Sept., 1939. INS
photo in *The Vanished World*, (The Forward
Association, 1947).

COURSES

Women in Jewish Literature A Fall 1980 Course at the Workmen's Circle* emphasizing modern Yiddish and Jewish-American Literature. Taught by LILITH advisory board member: Sheva Zucker. Fourteen, 90 minute sessions Thursdays, 6-7:30 P.M. Beginning October 9th, Fee \$45.00. *Info: W.C. Education Dept. 45 E. 33rd St., N.Y.C. 10016, 889-6800 ext. 600

Movement for a New Society will present a nine-month training program in Philadelphia, starting in early October. The program is geared to people with a long-term commitment to social change, and focuses on Political Theory, the Personal and the Political, Oppression/Liberation issues, Group Process, Organizing, Living in Political Community, and other issues desired by the program participants. Movement for a New Society is a nationwide network of small groups working non-violently for fundamental social change. MNS stresses democratic processes and consensus decision-making, and personal, spiritual, and political change that empowers people to gain control over their own lives. For more information write Training Organizing Collective, 4722 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143; (215) 724-1464.

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The Generation After, an organization of children of survivors and others, has limited copies available of Dennis King's articles on Lyndon LaRouche, mentioned in the anti-Semitism article on page 8 of LILITH. 2747 Throop St., Bronx, NY 10469

What is the Jewish attitude toward animals? What is Jewish law on hunting, "sports," trapping, experiments, pets? Send \$3 for materials to CHAI, Jewish committee to help animals international, Box 3J, 225 W. 106 St., NYC 10025

LILITH is preparing a special issue on the role of women in the Holocaust and Resistance. Please send any materials to LILITH, 250 West 57 St., NYC 10019.

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Your First Period? Participate in Menstruation research. "M" 55 Sutter, Suite 641, San Francisco, Calif. 94104

Plans are underway for a National Jewish Wimmmin's conference to be held in Seattle in the Spring. Anyone interested in attending, giving workshops, sharing ideas and/or helping in any other way should be in touch with the Jewish Lesbian Group of Seattle and Kadima, who are organizing the conclave. Contact: Judith Klein, 1516 18th Ave., Seattle, WA. 98122, (206) 324-6394.

Jewish Telegraphic (news) Agency seeks mature person as editorial typist on IBM Exec. Typewriter. Sun-Th, 11-6. Competitive sal., fringe benefits. Write JTA, 165 W. 46 St., NYC 10036. No calls.

Coming soon! **The total, comprehensive handbook and survival guide for Jewish women** around the world will be published by a major NY publisher. The book will be about women's creative solutions to problems they've faced in Jewish life: How to get an Orthodox divorce when husband is reluctant to grant it. How to integrate your synagogue talk back when accused of being a "Princess" or a "Jewish mother." Do oral history with the women of your own family—and much, much more. In addition to the section on how Jewish women cope with change and *make* change in their personal lives and their communities, the book will provide unique resource listings for Jewish women everywhere.

To have your Jewish women's group (formal or informal, consciousness-raising, study group, women's minyan, etc.) listed in the Book, or to have yourself listed as a resource person with a particular field of expertise, please send name, address and ZIP, with a description (type each submission on a 3x5 card if possible) to: Sherry Weidman Schneider, c/o LILITH, W. 57 St., NYC 10019.

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- Feminism in Israel Under the Begin Regime
- The Jewish Establishment is NOT an Equal Opportunity Employer
- A Prayerbook Where God is Female
- Interview: Esther Broner

ISSUE #5

- Jewish Women in Prison
- The Volunteer Organizations: Vanguard or Rearguard?
- Experiences of Volunteers in NCJW and Hadassah
- Is Volunteer Activity a Sheltered Workshop?
- Feminist Critique of TV's "Holocaust" miniseries
- Appreciation of Gail Rubin, *za!*

ISSUE #6

- Cynthia Ozick's "A Vindication of the Rights of Jewish Women"
- The Politics of Ordination of Women in Conservative Judaism
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